THE PROCEEDINGS

of

The South Carolina Historical Association

1967

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OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION, 1967-68

President.....Bradley D. Bargar, University of South Carolina

Vice-President.....Winston C. Babb, Furman University

Secretary-Treasurer.....Robert C. Tucker, Furman University

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(In addition to the officers named above)

Lowry Ware, Erskine College

Henry von Hasseln, Anderson College

Ronald D. Burnside, Presbyterian College

Editor of Proceedings

Jack S. Mullins, State Committee for Technical Education

The South Carolina Historical Association supplies the *Proceedings*, which are abstracted in *Historical Abstracts*, to all its members. The Executive Committee elects the Editor. Beginning in 1935, every fifth number contains an index for the preceding five years. The price of the *Proceedings* to persons not members of the Association is $2.00 per copy. Orders should be sent to the Secretary-Treasurer, whose address is Furman University Library, Greenville, South Carolina.

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JACK S. MULLINS
Editor

COLUMBIA
THE SOUTH CAROLINA
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
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THE THIRTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING

The thirty-seventh annual meeting of the South Carolina Historical Association was held Saturday, April 8, 1967, at the University of South Carolina, Columbia. About 80 members and guests attended one or more of the programs.

Following registration and a coffee hour, members attended one of two sessions that met at 10 a.m. in Russell House. In Room 207, a paper on "The Evolution of Warfare: An Interpretation" was read by Archer Jones, University of South Carolina, and a paper on "Farmers and Nazis: The Influence of the German Rural Classes in Hitler's Rise to Power" was read by Clifford Lovin, Western Carolina College. These papers were discussed by Larry H. Addington, The Citadel, and Peter Becker, University of South Carolina. In Room 205, a paper on "Recent Trends in the Historical Interpretation of the Reformation" was read by John Dolan, University of South Carolina, and a paper on "Recent Trends in the Historiography of the American Revolution" was read by William F. Streirer, Jr., Clemson University.

Luncheon was served in the Grand Ballroom of Columbia Hall, formerly the Columbia Hotel, beginning at 1:00 p.m. It was followed by a business session over which President Fortunato presided. Dr. Robert D. Ochs, Head of the History Department of the University of South Carolina, welcomed members to the University. The President gave his report, a copy of which is appended, which was accepted upon motion of Dr. Winston C. Babb. Reading of the minutes of the last meeting was dispensed with and the Treasurer's report, a copy of which is appended, was distributed. The Secretary reported that in 1966 there were 102 paid-up members and 101 library subscribers to the *Proceedings*. He also announced that henceforth the *Proceedings* will be abstracted in *Historical Abstracts*.

Mr. von Hasseln brought a report from the Executive Committee, nominating the following slate of officers for 1967/68:

President: Bradley D. Bargar, University of South Carolina

Vice-President: Winston C. Babb, Furman University

Secretary-Treasurer: Robert C. Tucker, Furman University

Executive Committee member: (term to expire 1970) Ronald D. Burnside, Presbyterian College

There were no nominations from the floor and the report was adopted. President Fortunato announced that Dr. Jack S. Mullins had been re-elected Editor of the *Proceedings* by the Executive Committee.

Dr. Ware reported that Dr. J. M. Lesesne, Jr., will continue as Chairman of the Membership Committee and that he will seek a co-chairman among the high school teachers of history, and he announced that the matter of having a separate session designed primarily for high school teachers would be left to the discretion of the Vice-President and Program Chairman.

Dr. Mildred C. Beckwith called on Mr. M. Foster Farley of Newberry College who read a memorial resolution on the late Dr. Frank W. Ashley. Dr. Beckwith then read a memorial resolution on the late Dr. Alvin L. Duckett. She made a motion that these resolutions be printed in the minutes of the meeting and that copies be sent to the relatives; her motion was seconded and passed.

Dr. Jack S. Mullins gave a short report on the Historical Resources Conference which he had attended.

The President announced that the 1968 meeting will be held at Erskine College on March 30.

Dr. Babb made a motion that the Association express its appreciation to President Jones of the University of South Carolina and his associates for their hospitality and especially to Dr. Bradley D. Bargar for his handling of the local arrangements; his motion was seconded and passed.

Dr. Bargar announced that the Ainsley Hall house or mansion would be open until 5 p.m. by special arrangement for the benefit of members who would like to see it.

Dr. Daniel W. Hollis, the Association's member of the Governor's Tri-Centennial Commission, reported that the Commission is a good one, that they had a secretary, and hoped soon to have an executive director. He asked members to let him have their thoughts on what would make a fitting commemoration in 1970 and requested the President to appoint a committee of three or five to give advice on the matter.

There being no further business, the business meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

The afternoon session was held in the Grand Ballroom of Columbia Hall, beginning at 2:30. A paper on " 'Southward is Our Destiny': Border Relations between the Southern Confederacy and Mexico" was read by Richard M. Gannaway, Converse College, and a paper on "Wilbur J. Cash: Iconoclast" was read by B. G. Moss, Limestone College. These papers were discussed by Joseph L. Arbena, Clemson University, anl John Scott Wilson, University of South Carolina.

The banquet session was held in the Grand Ballroom of Columbia Hall, beginning at 6:30 p.m. Felix Markham, Fellow of Hertford College, Oxford University, read a paper on "The Role of Oxford University in the History of England in the XVIIth Century," after which the meeting was adjourned.

ALVIN LAROY DUCKETT

Alvin Laroy Duckett was born in Greenwood, South Carolina, on August 25, 1908. He was graduated from The Citadel in 1930, completed his master's degree at the University of North Carolina in 1939, and was awarded his doctorate from the same institution in 1956. Except for military service in the Coast Artillery (1940-1945), in which he rose to the rank of colonel, his adult life was devoted to the teaching of history in the high schools of South Carolina, at Washington and Lee College and at Winthrop College. He joined the faculty of the latter institution in 1950 as an assistant professor and was promoted successively to associate and full professor. At the time of his sudden death he was chairman of the Department of History, Government, and Geography. As a professional historian, he was a member of state, regional and national associations and took an active role in the work of the South Carolina Archives Commission. In 1962 he published *John Forsyth: Political Tactician* and shortly before his death made plans to edit Forsyth's journal.

To his students Alvin Duckett was a wise counsellor, an admired and respected teacher; to his colleagues he was a dedicated historian, an able and patient administrator; to his close friends he was cherished for his gentle manner, his genuineness, his sagacity and his mental honesty; to all who knew him he was a modest and unassuming man who filled his place in society with an abundance of friendliness and genuine humility.

FRANK WATTS ASHLEY

In the death of Frank Watts Ashley on February 8, 1967, the South Carolina Historical Association lost a valuable member. Born in 1912 at Newton, North Carolina, Dr. Ashley received both his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of North Carolina and his doctorate from the University of South Carolina. A competent teacher of history, he has taught in the public schools of North and South Carolina and later at Emory Junior College at Valdosta, Georgia, Furman University, Western Carolina State Teachers College, the University of South Carolina, Columbia College, and Newberry College. Active in state, regional and national professional organizations, Dr. Ashley also gave unsparingly of his time to student and political activities.

"As a teacher and administrator and friend," commented one of his colleagues at Newberry, "Dr. Ashley was one of the strongest pillars of the College."

THE EVOLUTION OF WARFARE—AN INTERPRETATION

ARCHER JONES

Captain B. H. Liddell Hart criticized the writing of military history thus:

> The fault in the past has lain with the dramatic tendency of chroniclers to exaggerate the element of luck, so popular in its appeal. . . .
>
> The fault in recent times, since history began to be treated scientifically, has been the neglect of war by historians. With few exceptions, they have left the field to the mercy of military chroniclers zealous to glorify achievements rather than to discover the facts, and descriptive artists anxious for a colourful effect, most easily produced by vivid emphasis of the chances of battle.[1]

One of the few writers who, like Liddell Hart himself, sought to interpret rather than chronicle was Jacques Alphonse Colin. Just before World War I, there appeared an English translation of his *The Transformations of War*. This work, which presents a unified interpretation of the evolution of warfare up to that time,[2] is not well known in spite of B. H. Liddell Hart's description of Colin as "the most scientific of the new French school of military historians that arose at the end of the nineteenth century," and "probably the ablest military mind in the French army in 1914. His death in Macedonia while holding a relatively unimportant post was certainly, for France, a tragedy of wasted talent."[3] Apparently because of the limited distribution of his last work and because, like other writers before World War I, Colin concluded that the power of the offense was growing, this interpretation has had a very limited influence. It deserves more attention in view of the quality of its scholarship and comprehensiveness and unity of its interpretation.

With some minor but significant modification, Colin's interpretation will embrace World Wars I and II and provide a basis for assessing subsequent military developments. In either its original or modified form, it provides an excellent basis for the analysis of the one war available to him to which Colin did not give thorough study, the American Civil War. After summarizing Colin's interpretation, the modifications will be presented together with a suggestion as to how they make Colin's ideas applicable to the two World Wars.

Colin treats all warfare prior to the eighteenth century as essentially unchanged in tactics and strategy and unchanging, except for the impend-

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[1] B. H. Liddell Hart, *The Ghost of Napoleon*, New Haven, 1935, pp. 148-149.

[2] Jacques A. Colin, *The Transformations of War*, translated by L.H.R. Pope-Hennessy, London, 1912.

[3] Liddell Hart, *Ghost of Napoleon*, p. 192.

ing decisive influence of firearms and techniques of maneuver. The unchanging element is that "generally speaking, *the frontal fight does not lead to a solution.*" Thus "if we are to believe history, . . . a general would be mad to seek deliberately for victory through a frontal attack."[4] Having thus implicitly emphasized the power of the defense, he notes that "it is not that the offensive cannot succeed," but that it must be carried out "by maneuvering to take the enemy in flank." He gives emphasis to this often reiterated point by quoting Napoleon: "It is by turning the enemy, by attacking his flank, that battles are won."[5] This major generalization from history is a recurring theme in Colin's work. It fits the military operations since his death as well as those which he had studied.

A more significant aspect of his generalization about the power of the defense is his emphasis on the difficulty, even impossibility, of forcing action upon an enemy unwilling to engage. Illustrating this point with the campaigns of Caesar and Condé, he demonstrates convincingly that, with the unitary armies which prevailed from the earliest times up to the eighteenth century, it was impossible "to grasp, to squeeze, or even to push back on some obstacle an adversary who refuses battle, and retires laterally as well as backwards." Until the latter part of the eighteenth century a battle "only takes place by mutual consent," because an army is able to "retire laterally, and disappear for months by perpetually running to and fro, always taking cover behind every obstacle in order to avoid attack."[6] Slow deployment and ponderousness of maneuver contributed to an indecisiveness and a strength of the defense which Colin summarizes thus:

> And so, from the highest antiquity till the time of Frederick II, operations present the same character; not only Fabius or Turenne, but also Caesar, Condé, and Frederick, lead their armies in the same way. Far from the enemy they force the pace, but as soon as they draw near they move hither and thither in every direction, take days, weeks, months in deciding to accept or to force battle. Whether the armies are made up of hoplites or legionaries, of pikemen or musketeers, they move as one whole and deploy very slowly. They cannot hurl themselves upon the enemy as soon as they perceive him, because while they are making ready for battle he disappears in another direction.[7]

Having used a wealth of historical examples to substantiate these points about the power of the defense and the indecisiveness of war prior to the eighteenth century, Colin turns to the transformations brought about by

[4] Colin, *Transformations of War,* pp. 6, 70-71; italics are Colin's. See also pp. 41, 63, 73, 106, 149.

[5] *Ibid.,* pp. 11-12, 119. See also pp. 9, 63, 73, 106, 149.

[6] *Ibid.,* p. 197.

[7] *Ibid.,* p. 196. See also pp. 192, 193, 197-200, 203, 220, 229.

improved firearms, for it is upon this technological innovation that much of his interpretation depends. "Neither the handling of weapons nor the science of marches derives from the general character of the operations; on the contrary, weapons determine the manner of fighting" and ultimately "the physiognomy of the entire war."[8]

Turning to the transformations of the eighteenth century, he argues that the indecisiveness of eighteenth century war was a manifestation, not of conditions special to that century, but of the nature of warfare from the earliest times to that period. Noting that "writers have tried to see in the slowness" of eighteenth century war "the effect of a political system," he denounces that as an "absurd thesis" and emphasizes that "this sort of war was not peculiar to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; that it had been practiced as long as there had been armies; that the generals of antiquity acted in no other way that those of Louis XIV." The characteristics of eighteenth century war were simply those imposed by the perennial condition under which "it was already almost impossible . . . to come up with one's adversary if he were slipping away." Then Colin asks:

> What could be done then? There was nothing to be gained by pursuing the enemy without pause; after ten years of it one would have got no farther. A skillful general would proceed to what may be called 'works of approach'; the country is quartered by canals—he will seize each square successively, besieging and taking the fortresses that enclose it; he will possess himself of the essential points of the country, of the bridges and the defiles, and where this is impossible he will carry off the corn and forage. He will thus restrict his adversaries little by little into a closed area, where at last they will be obliged to accept battle.[9]

Then Colin analyzes three related developments that transformed war by giving infantry the power to maneuver. Heretofore infantry could not maneuver "without breaking its lines," leaving gaps, and "running a risk of the enemy throwing himself into them and taking in flank both segments; . . . ." With improvements in the musket towards "the end of the seventeenth century infantry fire begins to become sufficiently rapid to admit of sweeping effectively the intervals left in a front."[10] A little later a solution was found for the ponderous maneuvers which "prevented armies from passing rapidly from column of route to battle formations, from hastening the encounter, and from seizing hold of the enemy and forcing him to fight." The development of a column that was "able almost instantaneously to deploy on its head" made it possible "that an army might march in sev-

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 199-200.
[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 197-198; 200-201.
[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 107-108.

eral columns and promptly range itself in battle order as soon as its advanced guards had obtained contact with the enemy."[11] The third development was the subdivision of armies into divisions, which made it possible "continually to dislodge the enemy by a sort of drive, leaving him no alternative but that of battle or direct retreat."[12]

Thus lay at hand the tools of infantry maneuver and dispersion of armies to which the development of firearms contributed importantly. Colin probably laid too much stress on the transformation which was completed by Napoleon; who "found the ancient system of war, with its permanent concentrations, its unity of action, but also its slowness, its innocuousness, face to face with the new system of war, which allowed of the operations being vigorously pushed forward, which risked leading and indeed alrealy had led, to dissemination." Napoleon took "from each what is good in it, combining the practice of divisional distribution with the principle of unity, and out of it he forms a complete system."[13]

In addition to overestimating the transformation wrought by the Napoleonic era, Colin was led to an important and erroneous generalization: "And so the defensive would seem to be doomed to further loss of its advantages." Since "the early progress of firearms . . . is definitely favourable to the offensive," he concluded that "undoubtelly the progress effected in armament is favourable to the offensive. . . ." He reached this conclusion by generalizing the transformation of the eighteenth century. "With primitive weapons war is relatively slow; the more weapons are perfected, the more promptly and easily does it become decisive, ..."[14]

How with such thorough scholarship and careful analysis was Colin led astray? Essentially he seems to have neglected to see that the same developments which increased the power of the offensive correspondingly strengthened the power of the defense. His study of nineteenth century military operations showed him that "modern weapons admit of holding defensive positions with fewer troops than formerly," but he concluded that "the more the perfecting of weapons prolongs the frontal fight and allows of an economy of troops necessary to resistance, the more time and resources are available for turning movements and the principal attack. Progress in firearms invariably favours the offensive."[15] Obviously he neglected the ability of a small force to delay the offensive until reinforcements can come up and halt it.

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[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20, 207.
[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 209.
[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 229.
[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 13, 26, 200. See also p. 203.
[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 158, 192.

Less obviously, the same paradox is found in his excellent point about the dispersal of armies in divisions increasing the ability to bring the enemy to battle. The increased ability to bring the enemy to action, attributable in part to the improvement in firepower, failed to produce the expected increase in the power of the offense because the very same increase in firepower reduced the likelihood of a decisive victory when action was forced. Thus, by the end of 1914, three years after his work was published, the enemy was brought to action along the entire front in a defensive deadlock as complete as any Montecuccoli ever imposed on Turenne. Not only had firepower aided the defense as much as it had strengthened the offense, but the increase in numbers had eliminated flanks, illustrating again "a characteristic common to the battles of every epoch." Colin had "noted it in the battle of antiquity: the frontal fight leads to no solution; it is an attack in flank or in reverse . . . which procures victory."[16]

The eclipse of Colin's interpretation was natural in view of its failure to explain World War I. Colin's death in 1917 prevented him from providing in the postwar period a revision which would have made his interpretation applicable to that conflict.

Though apparently Colin's transformation of the eighteenth century was no transformation at all, he has said much of great value for the understanding of military history. War in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was indecisive, but not peculiarly so. Similarly World War I was not, in this sense, a departure from past patterns of military operations. Slow and indecisive campaigns and wars, of which these are particularly vivid examples, have characterized all warfare and the defensive has always had the preponderating influence. This generalization, well substantiated by Colin's work and by World War I, is of considerable value to historians. It will save them much searching to determine why their particular war or military era was characterized by indecisiveness. Particularly, should it (though it hardly will) dampen speculations which begin with a phrase such as "If Longstreet had only done so and so . . . ." Now the "If" must create an exception to the generally indecisive character of all military operations. This will be an insuperable burden for most of the "Ifs."

Though there will be exceptions, Colin's initial generalization about the inconclusiveness of all military operations can very conveniently be extended through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and through World War I. Although the Franco-Prussian War provides an exception which is only with some difficulty embraced in Colin's revised theory, the German

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 106.

campaign against France in 1940 clearly overthrows an interpretation which worked quite well heretofore.

A unified interpretation may be developed by noting the three modifications that are the principal contribution of this paper. Taken together, these will interpret all which Colin adduces and World Wars I and II as well. The first of these modifications is a distinction between offensive and defensive troops. Implicitly Colin makes this distinction, defining offensive troops as those which are able to maneuver without exposing themselves to destruction because their ranks have been broken, and who could, essentially, fight as they marched without so protracted a delay in deployment that the enemy could escape.[17] Colin's distinction, which was applicable to infantry, failed since his offensive troops were not effective against defending troops with the same attributes, that is, his maneuverable infantry with good firepower failed in offensives against maneuverable infantry with equal firepower.

If, however, cavalry is used as the model and offensive troops are defined as having Colin's attributes plus differential mobility, then a workable definition is attained. By differential mobility is meant the ability to move more rapidly than some other type of troops in your own and the enemy's army. By the analogy of Medieval cavalry, some armor protection may be added to this definition of offensive troops, but this is not necessary. Under this definition the slower moving infantry are, in all eras, essentially defensive troops.

The utility of this distinction is obvious. Cavalry was the offensive arm and by the end of the eighteenth century it was very nearly driven from the battlefield by the progress of firearms. It was not their loss of armor protection that doomed them, so much as the fact that mounted they were more vulnerable than infantry. They retained their mobility and could fight as infantry, but they could no longer fight as they marched; it was necessary to halt, dismount, and form as infantry before they could go into action.

The total elimination both of flanks and of offensive troops goes far toward explaining the stalemate on the western front in World War I and the revival of offensive troops in the form of motorized infantry and tank forces explains the restoration of the power of the offense in World War II.

The second distinction that is of value in modifying Colin's interpretation is one between homogeneous and heterogeneous armies. Obviously an army with both offensive and defensive troops is heterogeneous and a Medieval army with only offensive troops or a World War I army with only defensive troops is homogeneous. However, this distinction goes a

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 7, 11-12, 160-163.

little farther in that a Renaissance army with both pikemen and arquebusiers is heterogeneous even without its cavalry. The significance of this distinction is that with heterogeneous troops there are opportunities for combinations, opportunities for good generalship and for blunders which are absent with homogeneous forces. Variations in mixtures and dispositions of the different varieties of troops were very significant during Renaissance warfare, for example.

There are more recent examples of the significance of this distinction. At Blenheim in 1704, Tallard held his center with cavalry rather than infantry. This factor in his dispositions may well have made the difference between victory and defeat. In World War II, both the French and, initially, the Russians distributed their tanks among their infantry. This approach to their distribution made an important contribution to their defeats. So with heterogeneous forces there are opportunities for both good and incompetent generalship which are absent with the homogeneous infantry forces which prevailed in the nineteenth century and until 1917. Thus the increasing power of the defense is further explained by the musket, rifle, and machine gun driving other arms into disuse as well as their elimination of offensive troops which relied on the horse.

These two distinctions also help explain the declining rate of casualties in battle and particularly the fact that defeats become increasingly less damaging to the defeated.[18] The heavy losses and severe disruption and disorganization of a seventeenth century defeat is less characteristic of the eighteenth century and is no longer present in the nineteenth century. The decline and disappearance of offensive troops and heterogeneous armies both help to account for this change, because similarly armed troops with the same degree of mobility have great difficulty in obtaining any decisive advantage over each other.

Another factor, which Colin regarded as aiding the offensive, also contributed to the reduction in the decisiveness of victory. This was the development of the division and the marked increase in articulation and control which was brought about at the end of the eighteenth century together with the increased power of maneuver that was developed at the same time. The very same articulation and control that permitted bringing the enemy to action not only made possible defensive maneuver but also permitted the defeated army to retain its cohesion and extricate itself in good order. The disorganization and heavy losses of an old-fashioned army in defeat is clearly illustrated by the fate of the eighteenth century Prussian army after

[18] *Ibid.*, pp. 174, 176-178.

Jena and Auerstadt. Improved arrangements for command and control have largely prevented comparable disasters since then.

Thus we see that, culminating in 1917, almost every change in warfare was strengthening the defense until homogeneous and extremely well controlled and articulated armies of defensive troops strove vainly for a decision, even though progress in maneuver as well as the growth in numbers had contributed to their ability to bring each other to battle. With the reappearance of offensive troops and heterogeneous armies the power of the offensive has been restored to its old very modest level; amplified by the ability to bring the enemy to action through increased mobility, but with the destructiveness of defeat and the significance of victory markedly reduced by improved command and control.

Colin's generalizations about the slow and indecisive character of war have been in no way altered by the modifications suggested in this paper. Rather his basic interpretation has been extended to the present and, as has been pointed out, the same dispersion and mobility which increased the ability to bring the enemy to action is still offset by the additions which this increased articulation makes to his defensive power and to mitigating the effect of defeat. Even the ability to bring the enemy to battle seems to be slipping away, for the old ability to prolong operations and frustrate the offense by disappearing from the enemy's front seems to have reappeared in guerilla warfare and the despised methods of the eighteenth century seem to be again applicable. The very soldier who would disparage eighteenth century magazines and fortresses speaks approvingly of their modern analogue, the strategic hamlet.

FARMERS AND NAZIS: THE INFLUENCE OF THE GERMAN RURAL CLASSES IN HITLER'S RISE TO POWER

CLIFFORD R. LOVIN

It is probably true that the phenomenon of National Socialism in Germany has inspired a more prolific historical literature than anything since the French Revolution. In view of this, it may seem somewhat foolish to attempt to add to the vast array of information already available about the subject, but such is the folly of history. The focus of this paper will be on the rise of Hitler to power, and, more specifically, on the significance of the agricultural population in the Nazi electoral victories.

The increasing number of farmers who voted for Hitler during the early 1930's was the result of three factors: the deteriorating economic plight of the owners of small and medium-sized farms; their inability to exert effective political influence; and the decision by the Nazis to seek actively the vote of this dissatisfied group. In connection with the first two factors, it should be pointed out that the farmers to whom the Nazi appeals were to be directed were a specialized group. The large landowners, although they were disgruntled at having lost their feudal power, still exerted a dominant influence in the Weimar Republic, and therefore were able to obtain legislation to meet their particular needs. The landless farm laborers were, for the most part, controlled by local authority and were not receptive to political appeals. The group between, however, was economically destitute and politically frustrated. Their despair had produced a few protest activities, but these were ineffectual because of a lack of leadership and the absence of a positive program. The few genuine political oranizations that were designed to exert pressure in the *Reichstag* failed because the *Junkers* invariably were able to gain control.

In this atmosphere of economic despair and political frustration, Hitler demonstrated his political acumen by his decision to organize these farmers for Nazism. He was aware that his electioneering techniques, which were aimed at the urban masses, would not be suited for the rural population, so he sought a man who could develop a program that would appeal to the farmers. Early in 1930 his deputy, Rudolf Hess, introduced him to a young agrarian intellectual named Walther Darré. Hitler and Darré realized quickly that their ideas on race and agriculture were similar. This, plus the promise of an enlarged electorate, led Hitler to feel that "he had met the man here who had the ability to unite the German farmers and to rally

them to the swastika."[1] He thereupon appointed Darré as his special deputy in charge of marshaling agricultural support for the party. According to Darré, this appointment was without restrictions. Hitler said, "Organize the farmers for me; I will give you a free hand."[2]

The background of this little-known civil servant whom Hitler appointed need not detain us long.[3] He was born in Argentina on July 14, 1895, of German parents. His schooling, obtained in Germany and England, was designed to prepare him to be a colonial farmer. World War I, in which Darré served with distinction, and the Paris Peace Conference ended that possibility, but he continued his agricultural studies. In 1925, Darré was licensed as a *Diplomlandwirt,* which qualified him for employment in various agricultural pursuits. He spent several years in the civil service as an agricultural adviser before retiring in 1928 to write a book containing his ideas about race, the Germans, anl agriculture. This book, *Das Bauerntum als Lebensquell der Nordischen Rasse,* was followed in 1930 by *Neuadel aus Blut und Boden.*[4] These works caught the eye of Hess and led to the meeting between Hitler and Darré.

The words of the title of the latter book—"The New Nobility of Blood and Soil"—provide a key to an understanding of Darré's ideas. The people in Germany who were racially and culturally the purest, said Darré, were the farmers. Their importance then was not primarily economic. To be sure, they were to produce an adequate food supply, but their main significance lay in the propagation of a pure race. The infamous doctrines of Marxism and liberalism, said Darré, had led to the belief that agriculture was only a part of the national economy. This precipitated a decline in prices on farm products that in turn caused a flight from the land. The only solution for this deterioration, which threatened to destroy the German nation, was to eliminate the factors leading to the decline of agriculture and to introduce a positive program to upgrade the position of the farmer both socially and economically. Then, as a true nobleman receiving his just rewards, the farmer would serve proudly as the source of his nation's strength.

On March 6, 1930, the "Official Party Manifesto on the Position of the N.S.D.A.P. with regard to the Farming Population and Agriculture" was

[1] Erwin Metzner, "Blut und Boden als Grundlagen unseren Volkstums," *Nationalsozialistische Monatshefte,* V, 225.

[2] Hermann Reischle, *Reichsbauernführer Darré,* Berlin, 1933, p. 48.

[3] See *ibid., passim.*

[4] Walther Darré, *Das Bauerntum als Lebensquell der Nordischen Rasse,* second edition, Munich, 1933, and *Neuadel aus Blut und Boden,* Munich, 1930.

released in Munich.[5] Except for the fact that only a small portion of the document deals with the racial importance of the farmer, it could be characterized as a summary of Darré's books. It began with a description of the importance of the farming class: "We not only recognize the predominant importance of the agricultural class for our nation, but we also see in the rural population the chief preservers of the nation's racial health, the source of the nation's youth, and the backbone of its military potential. The maintenance of an efficient agricultural class . . . is a cornerstone of the National Socialist policy . . . ."[6] The manifesto presented a positive program: (1) The agricultural policy will aim at maintaining and increasing the number of prosperous small and medium-sized farms. These farms must be owned by Germans and cultivated by their owners. (2) Financial security will be assured by legislation designed to raise prices, by placing the responsibility for agricultural credit in the hands of the state, and by improved inheritance laws. (3) Settlement of landless agricultural workers on farms of their own will be a major goal.

The realization of the program, said the manifesto, could not be obtained by acting through any of the governmental political parties, because "the Jewish world financial power, which actually controls parliamentary democracy in Germany, wishes to destroy German agriculture, since this would place the German people . . . completely at its mercy."[7] The situation was obviously so bad that only a radical solution would suffice: "The battle for freedom against our oppressors and their taskmasters can be fought successfully only by a political movement of liberation, comprising the German-conscious of all ranks and classes, and fully acknowledging the importance of the rural population and agriculture for the nation as a whole. This political liberation movement of the German people is the N.S.D.A.P."[8] This manifesto was an ingenious political document. It promised economic security, social prestige, and more land to the small farmers. Furthermore, the landless workers were promised their own farms, and at the same time the large landowners were assured that they had nothing to fear if they ran their farms efficiently. It presented the need for a healthy agricultural population in such a way as to invite everyone's approval, since only by increased agricultural produc-

[5] *Völkische Beobachter,* Munich, March 7, 1930. See also Gottfried Feder, *Das Programm der N.S.D.A.P. und seine weltanschauliche Grundgedanken,* Munich, 1939, pp. 9-14. An English translation of this was produced by the Nazis, but the translation is poor and sometimes misleading. That Darré was responsible for writing the program is verified in *Deutche Agrarpolitik,* II, 647.

[6] Feder, p. 9.

[7] *Ibid.,* p. 10.

[8] *Ibid.,* p. 14.

tivity could Germany achieve economic independence. Finally a clear, patriotic call was sounded for a Nazi government which was presented as the only alternative to national collapse.

After the appointment of Darré and the publication of the program, the agricultural appeal of the Nazis seemed to be as weak as before. As one searches through the daily newspapers, the political journals, and the rural newspapers of 1930 and 1931, one finds little about Darré and the new agrarian program. In the *Reichstag* debates, the only reference to agriculture by a Nazi deputy is found in one of Gregor Strasser's speeches in 1930.[9] The first public meeting of farmers with Nazi leanings, which was held in February, 1931, managed to get only a small article in Hitler's *Völkischer Beobachter.*[10] All of this seems very strange until one begins to understand the kind of organization Darré was interested in building. In the summer of 1930, from his office in Munich, Darré established his *Agrarpolitischer Apparat* (Agrarian Political Apparatus).[11] This was not to be a new mass organization through which farmers could make their influence felt, but it was rather a political machine made up of hand-picked personnel whose duty it was to infiltrate and take over the leadership of the existing farmer's associations. The structure of the Apparatus followed party lines, i.e., each *Gau* or district of the party would have an agricultural district adviser *(Landwirtschaftlicher Gaufachberater),* who was a member of the Apparatus, and each subdivision *(Kreis, Ort)* would have a local agricultural adviser. It should be kept in mind, however, that these advisers were subject directly to Darré rather than to the party leader in the district; hence the Apparatus was, in one sense, a personal political machine.

Without fanfare and publicity, the Apparatus began its task of infiltration. The instructions of Darré to his subordinates were explicit: "National Socialists must infiltrate the *Landbünde* and other agricultural organizations in order to gain a footing and capture the organizations, position by position from within."[12] The strategy of Darré was well chosen, for by the end of 1931, a National Socialist, Werner Willikens, had captured the presidency of one of the most important national agricultural organizations,

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[9] *Verhandlungen des Reichstags,* CCCXLIV (1930), 60.

[10] *Völkischer Beobachter,* Munich, February 11, 1931.

[11] A discussion of the *Agrarpolitischer Apparat* can be found in Reischle, *Reichsbauernführer Darré,* pp. 48-50; in *Völkischer Beobachter,* Munich, April 6, 1933; and in Hermann Reischle, "Agrarpolitischer Apparat und Reichsnährstand," *Nationalsozialistische Monatshefte,* V, 809-813.

[12] Eugen Schmahl and Wilhelm Seipel, *Entwicklung der Volkischen Bewegung,* Giessen, 1933, p. 149. See also Reischele, *Reichsbauernführer Darré,* pp. 48-49.

the *Reichslanlbund.*[13] By March 15, 1932, Goebbels was able to report that the league "has decided for us."[14]

Perhaps the best way to illustrate the methods and success of the Apparatus is to observe what happened in Hesse, which claimed to be typical of the whole Reich. Wilhelm Seipel, who became an official in the Nazi agricultural hierarchy in 1933, wrote about his experience in Hesse.[15] He explained that the Nazis made use of existing feelings and organizations insofar as possible. In Hesse, for example, they were able to center their attention on the anti-semitism that had been strong among the farmers in this area since the nineteenth century. In the beginning, a few National Socialists began to talk "in the evenings" to the farmers in Hesse. They made so much headway that the *Landbundführer,* Dr. Leutchgens, was forced to take an official position on the Nazi party. He made a fatal tactical error by moving into open opposition after the 1930 elections and by trying to take his organization with him. In Hesse's *Landtag* election on November 15, 1931, the Nazis became the largest party, while both Leutchgens and his deputy lost their seats. This killed the political influence of the *Landbund* and gave the chief representative of the Agrarian Political Apparatus in Hesse, Dr. Richard Wagner, the opportunity to assume real power in that organization. By 1933, Nazis held most of the posts of leadership so that the Hessian *Landbund* was ready to move directly into the corporate structure of agriculture set up by the National Socialist government.[16]

The program and the method of infiltration explains to some extent the success of Nazism among the farmers, but there remains another factor. How were the Nazis able to present their program in such an effective way as to make their infiltration quite easy? Hermann Rauschning, who was both a farmer and a politician in the early days of the Nazi period, gave a partial answer to this question. He stated: "The country people were well attended at their weak point by the party agitators. It was not merely the economic element that mattered. Nazism was well alive to the fact that the peasant, too, does not live by bread alone but has his own world of ideas

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[13] *Archiv des Reichsnährstandes,* I (1934), 7.

[14] Joseph Goebbels, *Vom Kaiserhof zur Reichskanzlei,* twelfth edition, Munich, 1937, p. 64.

[15] Schmahl and Seipel, pp. 133-167. A less detailed account of the Nazi take-over in Schleswig-Holstein appears in Thyge Thyssen, *Bauern und Standesvertretung,* Neumunster, 1958, pp. 396-414.

[16] For another example of the use of this general strategy see the resume of the life of Alfred Arnold, named *Landesbauernführer* for Württemberg in 1933, in *Württembergisches Wochenblatt für Landwirtschaft,* C (July 22, 1933), 281.

and emotions. Nazism—unhappily for us farmers—was the first to learn how to appeal to that world of ideas. . . ."[17]

The impression should not be given that the only Nazi method was infiltration. Once his political machine was organized, Darré and his assistants directed a mass of propaganda to the romantic and traditional predilections of the farmers. In September, 1930, Darré began editing an agricultural weekly newspaper called the *Nationalsozialistische Landpost.*[18] A monthly journal, *Deutsche Agrarpolitik,* under his direction, made its appearance in July, 1932. By means of these publications, a wider distribution of his books, and numerous speeches, Darré was able to get across his message.[19] He emphasized that the farmer was the basis of the German nation and the Nordic race as well as the source of the new nobility of the Third Reich. Darré reminded the farmer that the Nazis offered not only a higher social position, but also a larger income and security for his property. In addition, he coupled criticism of the faltering attempts of the Brüning government with the assertion that the destruction of the Weimar system and the institution of the Nazi concept of government was the only solution. "Blood and Soil" became the battle cry; a rebirth of the German nation, the goal.

All of these arguments had their effect. The farmer was pleased by this new attention. He grasped at the hope that his farm might not be taken away by the creditors. As a member of a minority class, he was suspicious of the democratic system. As a National Socialist in Hesse put it: "I ask, whether the aim of National Socialism, which is the destruction of democracy, or in other words, the tyranny of the consumers of agricultural products over the producers, must not also be our aim? I ask, whether we farmers can obtain that alone, or whether a party is not necessary, which offers to all Germans . . . the program, the structure, and the instrument for a common, successful struggle."[20] By the assurance of social and economic advancement to the farmer and by constant pressure on the government in office, the Agrarian Political Apparatus made a real contribution to the Nazi election victory in July, 1932.

The fact that the Nazis were successful in taking over certain agricultural organizations does not prove that the farmers were more important than any other group in Hitler's rise to power. Indeed, any such conclusion would be outside the scope of this paper. What is intended, however, is

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[17] Hermann Rauschning, *The Conservative Revolution,* New York, 1941, p. 135.

[18] Hans Volz, *Daten der Geschichte der N.S.D.A.P.,* Berlin, 1938, p. 30.

[19] A number of his speeches and articles for this period can be found in R. Walther Darré, *Um Blut und Boden,* Munich, 1940.

[20] Schmahl and Seipel, p. 144.

that the significant contribution of the farming class in the electoral triumph of the Nazis be recognized. In order to illustrate this importance, a number of citations are in order from works based on varying types of evidence and diverse methodologies. Some secondary accounts, but only a few, attribute to the farmers the major responsibility for the Nazi landslide of 1932.[21] Additional confirmation for this point of view comes from the work of several sociologists who carefully studied the election returns in various regions of Germany. Charles P. Loomis and J. A. Beegle pointed out that in rural areas where middle-class, Protestant farmers were numerous, the vote for Nazism was overwhelming.[22] Another sociologist, S. A. Pratt, who concentrated on the *Reichstag* election of July, 1932, in the cities concluded that it was obvious that Nazism had a greater appeal among the farmers than among the urban masses. He cited the fact that the overall Nazi percentage was 37.3, whereas it was only 33.5 in the cities.[23] The most intensive sociological study of this kind was undertaken by Rudolf Heberle in the province of Schleswig-Holstein.[24] He found that in this area, where most of the population was comprised of small freeholders whose products were not protected by government legislation, the voters backed the National Sociologists almost unanimously.[25]

Another method of coming to grip with the problem of the farmers' role in Hitler's rise is to look at the election figures themselves and the relative dispersion of the agricultural population. Statistics of this kind can be enlightening, but they must be used with care. A Nazi statistical comparison of eleven electoral districts shows that the percentage of Nazi votes in farming regions was significantly higher than in the selected urban areas.[26]

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[21] Werner T. Angress, "The Political Role of the Peasantry in the Weimar Republic," *The Review of Politics*, XXI, 547; John Bradshaw Holt, *German Agricultural Policy, 1918-1934*, Chapel Hill, 1936, p. 180; Alexander Gerschenkron, *Bread and Democracy in Germany*, Berkeley, 1943, p. 16; Robert B. Hillard, "The Genesis of the Economic and Social Program of the National Socialist Movement," Unpublished doctoral dissertation, State University of Iowa, 1957, p. 271; and Karl Dietrich Bracher, Wolfgang Sauer, and Gerhard Schulz, *Die Nationalsozialische Machtergreifung*, Cologne, 1960, pp. 389-390.

[22] Charles Price Loomis and Joseph Allan Beegle, "The Spread of Nazism in Rural Areas," *American Sociological Review*, XI, 724-734. See also Charles Price Loomis, *Political and Occupational Cleavages in a Hanoverian Village, Germany: A Sociometric Study*, New York, 1947.

[23] Samuel Alexander Pratt, "The Social Basis of Nazism and Communism in Urban Germany," Unpublished master's thesis, Michigan State College, 1948, pp. 261-263.

[24] Rudolf Heberle, "The Ecology of Political Parties: A Study of Elections in Rural Communities in Schleswig-Holstein, 1918-1932," *American Sociological Review*, IX, 402-424; Rudolf Heberle, "The Political Movements among the Rural People in Schleswig-Holstein, 1918-1932, I and II," *The Journal of Politics*, V, 3-26 and 115-141; and Rudolf Heberle, *From Democracy to Nazism*, Baton Rouge, 1945.

[25] See also *Berliner Tageblatt* (Berlin), August 4, 1932.

[26] Wolfgang Claus, *Der Bauer in Umbruch der Zeit*, Berlin, 1935, pp. 230-231.

The over-all percentage went from 38 in 1930 to 54 in 1932 in the selected agricultural areas and from 28 to 40 in the industrial districts. The author of this study comments on this phenomenon in the following manner: "And it is now, after the achievement of the National Socialist revolution, interesting to have established statistically, that the National Socialists won their broadest base from the farm regions."[27]

A political scientist, James Kerr Pollock, who looked at the election returns, made the comment that generally speaking the cities failed to respond to Hitler, but the "agricultural areas regularly showed a strong interest in him."[28] Pollock, however, shied away from making a firmer statement on the importance of the farm vote because there were significant exceptions. A later study with essentially the same material came up with a more definite conclusion. The monumental study of Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Die Auflösung der Weimarer Republik,* stated: "With the single exception of Chemnitz-Zwickau the best National Socialist electoral districts show an above-average agricultural character."[29] This assertion was based on a statistical table which lists the thirty-five German electoral districts in the order of their comparative Nazi strength. Twenty were above the national average for the Nazi vote, and, of these, fifteen had agricultural populations above the national average. Of the fifteen districts below the national Nazi average, only six had a large agricultural population, and all but one of these were predominantly Catholic.[30] In addition to this, it is interesting to note that the first two states to elect majorities to their *Landtage,* Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Oldenburg, ranked first and third respectively among the states in the percentage of their agricultural population.[31]

The purpose of this disquisition on electoral returns is not to prove or even to intimate that the agricultural population alone provided the votes for Hitler's electoral successes. However, it should now be quite clear that farmers did provide a very significant number of votes for the Nazi cause.

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[27] *Ibid.,* p. 229.

[28] James Kerr Pollock, "An Areal Study of the German Electorate, 1930-1933," *American Political Science Review,* XXXVIII, 94.

[29] Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Die Auflösung der Weimarer Republik,* second edition, Stuttgart, 1957, p. 648.

[30] *Ibid.,* p. 647. For further information see maps in Godfrey Scheele, *The Weimar Republic: Overture to the Third Reich,* London, 1946, pp. 150-151; in Johann von Leers and Konrad Frenzel, *Atlas zur deutschen Geschichte der Jahre 1914 bis 1933,* Bielefeld, 1934, pp. 24, 25, 31; and in *Statistisches Jahrbuch,* 1930, p. III. See also Heinrich Striefler, *Deutsche Wahlen in Bildern und Zahlen,* Düsseldorf, 1946, p. 63 and Table II in the Appendix, n. p. Actual election returns are in the appropriate volumes of the *Statistisches Jahrbuch* as well as in the *Berliner Tageblatt.*

[31] *Statistisches Jahrbuch,* 1932, pp. 544-545.

Therefore, any statement concerning the increase in National Socialist voting strength from 1930 to 1933 must recognize the importance of the farmers in this trend. And, to carry the argument a bit farther, the crucial role of Darré must be emphasized. Although he is not one of the flamboyant leaders of Nazism, his organizational ability, his consistency, and his insight were of utmost importance in the success of the Hitler movement, both before and after the acquisition of power.

RECENT TRENDS IN THE HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE REFORMATION

JOHN P. DOLAN

Writing in the *Historisches Jahrbuch* in 1955,[1] Hubert Jedin remarks that the history of the inner predispositions of the Reformation and the consciousness of this fissure has not yet been written. It can be written only when the atmosphere surrounding it has been disinfected. It is the great work of modern-day German scholarship that the atmosphere surrounding this period is being cleared of bias and prejudice. In no other branch of history is the living element so in evidence as in this field; in no other is the religious and the political more closely entwined. Yet, too often its students have been lacking in objectivity because from the Protestant side all reform is traced to Luther, and from the Catholic viewpoint all has been evaluated in the light of Tridentine decrees.

The idea of reform runs through the entire history of Christianity. It is something more than a mere response to change or return to the dead past. It is defined as "the idea of freedom, intentional and ever perfectible, multiple, prolonged, and ever repeated effort by man to reassert and augment values pre-existent in the spiritual-material compound of the world."[2] Even to those who looked upon the Reformation of the sixteenth century as a unique and final collective reform, it was apparent that it was becoming necessary to reform the Reformation itself. "Now once again by all concurrence of signs, and by the general instinct of holy and devout men . . . God is decreeing to begin some new and great period in His Church, even to the reforming of reformation itself."[3]

Although it may be somewhat of an exaggeration to identify the Reformation with the personality of Luther and to equate Protestantism with his doctrines, nevertheless from an ecumenical point of view we must accept the statement of Sell: "das Prinzip des Protestantismus im Grunde die Person Martin Luther ist."[4] There is scarcely a single instance in history in which one individual has such significance in a tremendous historic upheaval as Martin Luther assumes in the Reformation. To consider him merely as the enunciator of ideas traceable to a number of early theologians or to maintain, as Heller does, that his contribution to the Reformation was small (that it was, as it were, the spark that ignited the powder

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[1] Hubert Jedin, "Fragen um Hermann von Wied," *Historisches Jahrbuch,* LXXIV (1955), 609.

[2] Gerhardt Ladner, *The Idea of Reform,* Cambridge, 1959, p. 35.

[3] John Milton, *Areopagetica,* p. 32.

[4] Anton Sell, *Katholizismus und Protestantismus,* Leipzig, 1908, p. 40.

and that he was an occasion, not a cause, of the Reformation), is a view that no serious student of the period now accepts.

It must be borne in mind that the Reformation is not merely an historical event, a thing that happened in the past. It is an event still going on. One must realize that it is an extraordinarily complicated fact, in itself as well as in its centuries-old structure. It is as much a social movement as it is the work of outstanding individuals. If history is an uninterrupted welling up of life in a multitude of divisions, currents, and countercurrents, formed by changing influences and varied impulses, then, like life itself, it is basically a mystery. The necessity of going beyond a merely dogmatic evalution of the event must be stressed if we are to have a historical understanding of the Reformation. A dispassionate consideration of the event must not only have the quality of objective inquiry, but it must also free itself of that destructive force of self-interest that inevitably leads to fruitless controversy.

Unfortunately this attitude has not been that of Catholics regarding the Reformation. Beginning with the first Catholic biographer of Luther, his contemporary, John Cochlaeus, there has been a four-century old attempt to portray Luther as the frightful destroyer of the Church, a person who was motivatel only out of envy of Tetzel and hatred for the abuse of indulgences, a hypocrite and a false monk. The legends relating to Luther's Slavic (Hussite) origin, his affair with Catharina von Bora, and the circumstances of his death, which Catholics have kept alive for centuries, can be traced to the writings of this impassioned man.[5]

This attempt to paint Luther in the darkest hues, by taking his remarks out of context and appraising him in terms of such matters as his broken vows and his approval of Philip of Hesse's bigamy, continued throughout the following century, fostered by elements of confessional absolutism and the rationalism of the Enlightenment. One of the few Catholic attempts to evaluate Luther and the reforms in terms of historical objectivity was condemned and put on the Index. The work of Louis Maimbourg, *Histoire du Lutheranisme,* published in 1680, was a sincere effort to dispel some of the malicious legends concerning Luther that were the heritage of the seventeenth century. Yet the *rabies theologorum* was still alive enough to result in the author's expulsion from the Society of Jesus.

Bossuet, inspired with a sincere desire to achieve Christian reunion, an inspiration which he shared with Leibnitz, wrote his famous *Histoire des Variations des eglises protestantes,* in 1688.[6] Basically an attempt to lead

[5] *Joannis Cochlaei de actis et scriptis Martini Lutheri . . . fideliter conscripta,* Meguntia, 1549.

[6] Jacques Benigne Bossuet, *Oeuvres,* Paris, 1748, III, 67.

the various confessions back to the Catholic fold by demonstrating the falsity of their doctrines in their continual variations, it was to influence Catholic evaluation of Luther even to our own time. The work was primarily that of a theologian and its historical value is hindered by the lack of primray sources. To Bossuet, the basic error of Protestantism was its failure to comprehend the true nature of the Church, and it thus remains "un amas de sectes divisées entre elles qui se frappent d'Anathème les unes les autres."[7]

The Protestant picture of Luther, as Zeeden[8] points out, underwent a similar distortion. The late sixteenth century had already begun to regard him not merely as a personality, but as the central figure in the theological-historical development of the world. Luther became fixed to a dogma. Where Luther had restricted his doctrine of "true Christianity" to his interpretation of the Scriptures, his successors restricted it to the teachings of Luther, thus destroying that freedom of conscience that was so much the original doctrine of their founder. Luther was transported to a position where one no longer evaluates but adores—"into the sanctum and the mystery of God." No longer did his followers draw from the same well as the reformer; instead, they received water only from his hands. The very personality of Luther changed with the changes of Protestantism. Luther had proceeded from a deeply personal experience of faith; his successors transformed this into a principle, or rather principles, which were binding upon their followers. "A living experience became a dogmatic theology. Luther soon vanished behind his work. He became a myth." He who had been during his lifetime a great genius fighting against the abuses of the Church had within two generations become a Father of the Church, venerated as the founder of religion. He ceased to be a man and became instead a compendium of truth and orthodoxy.

The Pietists of the seventeenth century, with their spirit of religious revivalism, found in Luther a model for their call to a deeper spiritual life, a lessened emphasis on controversial dogma and ritual, and a wider practice of the Christian virtues. Both Spener and Francke represented a return to Luther's zeal for popular education and an extension of his philanthropic efforts. Their endeavor exposed Luther's doctrines for the first time to the investigations of secular historians. Arnold, in his interpretation (*Historia Lutheranismi,* 1692), turns once again to the personality of Luther, to a study of his inner spiritual development.

Yet the writers of the Enlightenment tended to evaluate Luther in terms of his medieval background. For Frederick the Great he was an

[7] *Ibid.*, XV, 175.
[8] Ernst Zeeden, *Martin Luther und die Reformation,* Freiburg, 1950.

"enraged monk" and a "barbarian writer." The rationalistic theologians of the eighteenth century continued to ascribe Luther's greatness to the fact that he liberated Christians from the fetters of episcopal suppression and made freedom the possession of every believer. For Goethe the Reformation was "eine Quark"—mere nonsense, in which the personality of Luther alone was of any real value or interest. Fichte, in his first address to the German nation in 1807, praised Luther as a national leader but found his teachings quite uninteresting.

A rebirth of Reformation studies found its antecedents in the very beginnings of critical historical studies. It is a phenomenon that can be traced to the movement in German universities that made the last century the great period of scientific history. Throwing off the shackles of the Enlightenment and dispelling the mists of Romanticism, the German historians of the early nineteenth century are to be thanked for initiating critical research in the Reformation field at a time when the consciousness of the role they were to play in a unified Germany was in its infancy.

The first two volumes of Ranke's *German History in the Era of Reformation*[9] were published in 1839. His most important source was a ninety-six volume edition of the proceedings of the imperial diet (1414-1613) from which he was able to reconstruct the development of Reformation period political institutions in Germany. He also utilized the archival materials of Weimar, Dresden, and Brussels. He made this study the backbone of his work. Ranke believed that just as there was no human activity of intellectual value which originated outside of God, "so there (was) no nation whose political life (was) not continually raised and guided by religious ideas." He shaped his interpretation of Germany in the sixteenth century with this conviction, viewing the ecclesiastical and political events of the Reformation as one movement.

According to Ranke the structure of the Church at the end of the fifteenth century was an awesome, but paradoxical, combination of secular and divine power, fanaticism and insipid scholarship, devout practice and brutality, religion and superstition. As a result of sustaining constant attack and frequently achieving conquest, it claimed not only universal competence for all peoples, but also control over the most intimate details of personal life. From the chronic conflict of the ecclesiastical and secular power, the Church had emerged victorious, bringing political disorder and impotence to Germany. Having won the day in the temporal order, the Pope dared to arrogate divinity to himself by usurping the place of Christ in His Church. Rome's legalists canonized the identification of the Pope's

[9] *Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation*, 6 vols., 1839-47.

will with God's will; the Pope flaunted his victory in his court's pompous material display of power. Could any reasonable man, asked Ranke, have opposed the reshaping of this structure in which a reasoned faith was hardly possible?

Early attempts at Church reform had been abortive, and ill-fated, too, was the experiment of cooperation between the Emperor and the estates. Abuses and greed caused opposition in both the religious and the political order. When the situation was approaching its worst, Martin Luther recaptured the core of evangelical Christianity. He unified and directed the movement, bringing all of Germany loosely together around him. Ranke let his nationalism affect his evaluation of Martin Luther: How much Luther could have done towards strengthening national unity, had he been able to oppose the Pope and nothing more!

The Pope intended to recover what he had lost, and the Reformers threatened to harm the secular and ecclesiastical order. Luther was, as a consequence, one of the greatest conservatives in history, whose aim had been not to overthrow the Empire, but to reform the Church and secure its new structure through cooperation with the state.

Ranke and the school of scientific history bequeathed a method and direction to Catholic Reformation scholarship, which had been revived by theologian Johann Adam Möhler (1796-1838).

The publication of Möhler's *Symbolik* in 1832 and of the *Reformation* of Döllinger in 1846-48[10] are milestones in the breakthrough that was to bring to German Catholic historians and, through them, to the historians of other countries a consciousness of the position of the Church in its true historical perspective. Writing of Döllinger, Lord Acton says: "If history cannot confer faith or virtue, it can clear away the misconceptions and misunderstandings that turn men against one another . . . . He learnt to think more favorably of the religious influence of Protestanism, and of its efficacy in the defense of Christianity; but he thought as before of the spiritual consequences of Lutheranism proper. When people said of Luther that he does not come well out of his matrimonial advice to certain potentates, to Henry and to Philip, of his exhortations to exterminate the revolted peasantry, of his passage from a confessor of toleration to a teacher of intolerance, he would not have the most powerful conductor of religion that Christianity has produced in eighteen centuries condemned for two pages in a hundred volumes."[11]

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[10] Ignaz Döllinger, *Die Reformation, ihre innere Entwicklung und ihre Wirkungen*, 3 vols., 1846-48.

[11] Lord Acton, *History of Freedom and Other Essays*, London, 1907, p. 168.

Even after the exhaustive work that followed the opening of the Vatican archives by Leo XIII, the works of these two men can be read today as remarkable insights into the Reformation and pre-Reformation periods. Although Döllinger followed Ranke in believing that the papacy was an institution that outlived its historical context, he must be listed along with Möhler as one of the most distinguished scholars of nineteenth-century Germany.

The next generation of German scholars were to develop, in the atmosphere of the Kulturkampf, conditions that could not help but color and weaken the objectivity of their writings. Janssen's influence by both Döllinger and Möhler, the aim to produce "eine bunte Mappe aus dem Zeitalter der Reformation" cannot be overlooked, but it was rather an avowed attempt to emancipate himself from the confines of confessionalism and the vestiges of the Enlightenment that, in his own words, was the aim of his research. Although he was no member of the Kleindeutch party in the German question of the day, his enthusiasm for a unified Germany colored his works. His *History of the German People,*[12] granted its popularity was in no small part due to its dramatic appearance in the midst of the Kulturkampf, was nevertheless one of the most important writings in the last century on the Reformation period. Yet even his Catholic readers were aware of its apologetical tone and the over-rosy picture he painted of Church deficiencies in the fifteenth century. Nonetheless his work gave an impulse to research into the conditions within the Church on the eve of the Reformation and inspired writers like Laemer, Falk, and Paulus. That the Germans were the scholars to explore an entirely new field of research in the newly opened Vatican archives and that Catholics were in the forefront in this epoch-making work, can be credited to men like Möhler and Döllinger. The latter's work was carried on by his favorite student, Ludwig von Pastor, already risen to fame through the publication of the first volume in his *History of the Popes.*[13] In Janssen, the spirit of the newly united Germany, the priest, and the apologist might be contrasted with Pastor, the Rhinelander, to whom the lecture halls of the universities had been closed by the government. In both, the element of polemics is found, but in Pastor there is evidence of the laymen's independence from theology and ecclesiastical direction.

The turn of the century—the era of Bülow, of the Center Party, of the reconciliation of the Catholic party in politics—witnessed a continuation of

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[12] Johannes Janssen, *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters,* 8 vols., 1876-94.

[13] Ludwig von Pastor, *Geschichte der Päste seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters,* Freiburg, 1925.

Catholic Reformation research. The appearance in 1903 of Denifle's *Luther und Luthertum*[14] enkindled a fire that has not yet burned itself out. If Denifle opened up the field of study of late medieval mysticism and the early development of Luther and his relation to scholasticism, he nevertheless left his readers, Catholic as well as Protestant, with a strong taste of bias and attack. The steadfast Dominican was attacking the fallen Augustinian with all the *studio et ira* that could be mustered. The appearance five years later of the Jesuit Grisar's three volumes on Luther,[15] did much to mitigate the vitriolic attack of Denifle; the latter's work remains today in the eyes of both Catholic and Protestant scholars a poor picture of Luther and a work that can hardly be termed objective or biographical. Lortz's *Die Reformation in Deutschland*[16] is far more acceptable to Catholic and Protestant alike.

"The Reformation," wrote Lortz, "arose out of the dissolution of the basic medieval principles." This statement properly unfolded, although it rings of oversimplification, could be a common denominator for the historical causes of the Reformation. After the eleventh century there prevailed a "movement of withdrawal from the Church," a revolution that originated in its spiritual center. The way was made straight for the advent of reform by a long series of events and ideas. At the far end of the series, they were the long range elements that terminated in the Reformation, and, at the nearer end, they were its immediate circumstances. Christendom slowly approached the point where separation from Rome did not appear to be un-Christian. The people were prepared to say "yes" to the doctrines of the Reformers when they heard them.

Lortz gave the "movement of withdrawal from the Church" a threefold expression. The Reformation was the disintegration of Christian ecclesiastical unity in the West; it was an enunciation of thoroughgoing discontent with the condition of the Church; and, above all, it was the rejection of Catholic dogma.

In the first place, strong crosscurrents began to rend medieval Christendom as early as the thirteenth century. One sign, according to Lortz, was the deeply rooted tension between Church and state, whose very relationship had been a manifestation of western ecclesiastical unity. The bitter fruit of this disintegration was the multiple papacy of the Western Schism, a scandal which introduced doctrinal uncertainty into the daily lives of all Christians and prepared them for Luther's rejection of the papacy.

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[14] Heinrich Denifle, *Luther und Luthertum*, Mainz, 3 vols., 1903-06.

[15] Hartmann Grisar, *Martin Luthers Leven und sein Werk*, Freiburg, 1929.

[16] Joseph Lortz, *Die Reformation in Deutschland*, Freiburg, 2 vols., 1949.

Secondly, the Reformation was an enunciation of discontent with the condition of the Church. After the twelfth century this discontent was expressed by sons of the Church on every level in progressively louder voices and more radical terms. The demands for reform "in head and members," especially for "reform in head"—the Pope and worldly Curia—planted seeds in men's minds which Luther harvested.

Principally, the Reformation was the rejection of Catholic dogma. During the centuries before the Reformation the Church was marked by lack of theological certainty. Lortz partially documented this thesis by studying the nominalism of Occam, which, although still within the Church, was "no longer fully Catholic." It terminated, fatefully, but understandably, in Martin Luther, who had been formed under the influence of Occam's school.

The Protestant theologian and sociologist Ernst Troeltsh (1865-1923), colored his treatment of the Reformation with a prejudicial hatred for the movement much as Denifle had distorted his for the sake of apologetics. Troeltsch was a professor of theology at the universities of Bonn, Heidelburg, and Berlin. He engaged in political activity to advance the democratization of the contemporary Lutheran Church, and consequently was unable to write the history of the Reformation with an open mind. He associated Luther and "Old Protestantism" with the rise of the absolute state and the state-church, both of which he despised. He refused to admit that the Reformation had in any real way contributed to the rise of modern civilization.

Troeltsch set forth his interpretation in two monographs that were published in 1906: *Protestant Christianity and Churches in the Modern World* and *The Significance of Protestantism for the Rise of the Modern World.* He interpreted the Reformation from the standpoint of the interrelation of religion and culture. Christianity, in order to have an influence on a culture, must penetrate and unite with it. Protestantism was the shape Christianity took in response to the problems of the early sixteenth century. These were substantially the same problems, in Troeltsch's view, that had preoccupied the middle ages. As a result the Reformers, great conservatives rather than revolutionaries, formulated their theology and ecclesiology in medieval terms.

Early Protestantism, according to Troeltsch, as distinguished from its altered modern form, was in essence a medieval ecclesiastical civilization analogous to Catholic Christendom. The individualism of the Reformation did not result in a Church without mediation. The certainty of the Protestant believer did not rely upon a hierarchical structure. His faith, although based on individual spiritual reassurance, was mediated through the di-

vinely revealed Word of the Scriptures. On this foundation Protestantism rebuilt the institution of the Church as an instrument of salvation. It rid the Catholic Church of a mediating priesthood and superstitions, replacing them with pure doctrine and soon became as doctrinnaire, authoritarian and rigid as the Roman Church.

The Reformation, despite the fact that it came up with a new solution, preoccupied itself with the medieval problem of salvation, wrote Troeltsch. The asceticism and supernaturalized spirituality of the Reformation were not different from the medieval ascetic ideal, but more comprehensive in that they were transplanted from the monastery into the world.

Protestantism in Troeltsch's opinion was not the parent of the modern world. Despite fresh ideas, the Reformation renewed and strengthened the ideal of ecclesiastical authoritative civilization. It inherited and accepted medieval preoccupations which suffocated whatever had already been achieved towards a free and secular culture. The Catholic revival elicited by the reform movement kept Europe medieval until awakened by reason two centuries later.

The most significant opponent of Troeltsch's thesis was Karl Holl (1866-1926), a professor of Church History at the University of Berlin. In 1921 Holl published a study on the thought and teaching of Martin Luther so well conceived and exceptionally new that a renaissance of Luther scholarship began with its center in his person and work. Holl maintained that religion exercised a creative influence on political, economic, and cultural development. He made it his object in *The Cultural Significance of the Reformation* (1911) to specify where and how the Reformation shaped culture. Lutheran theology had given man a new conception of himself as an individual constrained only by his duty towards God and a new conception of the Church as a personal fellowship of love. In relating these new conceptions to German culture, Holl took issue with Troeltsch's assertion that the Reformation was a medieval carryover.

Holl's success depended in part on his own fruits of historical research in which he had uncovered new material on the young Luther and in part on his systematic analysis of Lutheranism.

Paul Joachimsen (1867-1930), whose view of the Reformation represents the best fruit of modern Protestant historiography, stands between Troeltsch and Holl. Joachimsen, more than other modern scholars, was aware of the great debt Reformation studies owed to Ranke, and, appropriately, he was elected to supervise the German Academy's edition of Ranke's masterwork on Germany in Reformation (1925-1926).

Joachimsen summarized his own opinions in his essay "Renaissance, Humanismus und Reformation".[17] The Renaissance was the birth of an individualism that operated against the unity of the medieval feudal order. Its essence was the conviction that the reasoning individual could bring about a fundamental change in the world around him. The humanists gave the Renaissance a *Weltanshauung*, providing a basis for its individualism and rationalism. Petrarch, who opposed his aesthetic mysticism to scholastic theology, directed the Renaissance to strive after the "culture of the soul." Erasmus proclaimed the new ideal in his enlightened "philosophy of Christ."

The Reformation, the third agent in the disintegration of the middle ages, differed completely from the Renaissance and Humanism. Luther, contrary to his intention, became a prophet of religious reform. The tension between what Luther intended and the actual history of the movement he began characterized the Lutheran Reformation. Luther's purpose was to establish that freedom of the Christian believer that he had achieved in his personal quest for salvation. His experience of faith was monastic in origin and had no relation to the urgent rejoinders during the late middle ages for a Reformation in head members. It was not elicited as a reaction against ecclesiastical abuses as were the convictions of Wycliffe and Huss. Luther's individualism, a search for a personal merciful God, was essentially different from the philosophical individualism of Erasmus and Petrarch. Luther found his theology of mercy in the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith in God's love for the sinner. Luther expressed his newly acquired understanding of faith in a biblical theology which he opposed to scholasticism, but he was not aiming at instituting an ecclesiastical reform. His only concern was to fulfill his duties as a preacher of the Word. His theology brought him into opposition with the theory and practice of selling indulgences, thereby inadvertently beginning the Reformation.

Luther's Reformation developed in this contradictory fashion because of its location in history. It was mixed with Emperor Charles V's political entanglements and with German internal tensions over the unity of the Empire. The movement was also in contact with the social revolution, but because of Luther's fear of rebellion, gave its blessing to social and political conservatism. Theologically, the Reformation absorbed and produced a new scholasticism that was inferior, in many respects, to that which it had opposed.

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[17] Wilhelm Goetz, ed., *Propyläen-Weltgeschichte*, V, 1930.

CONFLICT OR CONSENSUS? RECENT TRENDS IN THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

WILLIAM F. STREIRER, JR.

The cliche that "each generation rewrites history" contains much validity. The post-World War II years are no exception, for most American historians have reacted to the myriad foreign and domestic threats and anxieties of the Cold War, McCarthyism, civil rights and similar dangers by creating an approach tailor-made to the past twenty years, if not necessarily appropriate for the period to which applied.

By the late 1940's, Richard Hofstadter turned to the so-called consensus approach in his book *The American Political Tradition.* Since that time the consensus path has been heavily traveled as historians have responded eagerly to the vague, inarticulate, but deeply felt, desire of Americans to gain and maintain unity in the face of internal and external dangers. Obviously, most Americans would prefer to picture their society today as a consensus with no fundamental differences. Such divisions as exist are easily explained as quarrels over the best means to attain the "Good Society." Seemingly significant controversies over problems like Negro rights, civil liberties, and urban decay are explained away as having been exaggerated out of all proportion by self-seeking demagogues.

Certainly, the consensus historians are more sophisticated in their analysis than the above over-simplification, but they, too, consider American society and the American nation as one and indivisible. Where better to find verification for this concept than in the past, and where better than at the very beginning of our national experience? So it is that since the early 1950's, the consensus historians descended upon the Revolutionary period intent upon proving that the uniqueness of America resulted from the lack of any sharp breaks with the past and the lack of any sharp divisions within revolutionary society. A basic continuity has persisted, causing any significant changes in American society up to the present to be evolutionary, and not revolutionary.

In another important area, the consensus historians exhibit the effects of their twentieth-century environment. They have abandoned the old-fashioned determinism that emphasized the inevitability of events occasioned by impersonal forces, especially economic forces, a process noticed by Jack Greene in his article, "The Flight from Determinism: A Review of Recent Literature on the Coming of the American Revolution," in the *South Atlantic Quarterly,* Spring, 1962. Consensus historians substituted an emphasis upon immediate issues and individual actions with a special

concern for psychological studies. This interest in psychology and behaviorialism, so characteristic of the twentieth century, expresses an admirable and important desire to improve the methodoligical and conceptual tools that the historians can employ; however, it may lead right back to determinism. Determinism of a new type, perhaps, but determinism nonetheless.

In the hands of the consensus historians, that possibility becomes fact. Men are dominated not by external determinants but by internal drives and forces just as uncontrollable. No basic conflicts exist between men in society, for the conflict is within each individual. They imply further that a study of individuals reveals that these internal, personal conflicts have a fundamental sameness and are resolved in identical fashion; necessarily so, since each man then brings into American society at large outlooks and attitudes that add up to the American national character. All they must do to discern the American National Character is to trace evolutionary changes.

To discover these trends in the recent historical studies of the Revolution, an examination of the work of Edmund S. Morgan serves as a good starting point. Since the publication in 1953 with his wife of *The Stamp Act Crisis: Prologue to Revolution,* Morgan has been the chief spokesman for the consensus school. More recently, he has implicitly looked for the origins of the American Revolution in the Puritan tradition in a set of books headed by *The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John Winthrop,* 1958. A strong connecting link between Puritanism and the Revolution exists for Morgan as he indicated in his article, "The American Revolution Considered as an Intellectual Movement," that appeared in 1963 in *Paths of American Thought,* edited by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and Morton White. Strongly influenced by Puritanism and other intellectual currents, Americans erected a social and political structure substantially independent of Britain, or, as he pointed out in 1956, in *The Birth of the Republic, 1763-1789,* the colonists were already self-governing by 1775 and were guided consistently by principles fulfilling the needs of their recently evolved society.

In all these works, Morgan promoted the attitude that Americans were correct in revolting, for the maturation of American society had made remaining within the British Empire an intolerable prospect. This process, occurring in the hearts and minds of the colonists, made it inevitable that they would seek their own solution to their own problems and break away from the Empire. The air of moral righteousness that Morgan adopted while analyzing British measures after 1763 is therefore inappropriate, for whatever the imperial authorities chose to do would be insufficient. The

American Revolution had taken place long before 1763, conceivably beginning when the Puritan tradition gained a foothold in New England.

For the period following 1763, Morgan emphasized the impact of the Stamp Act, noting that Americans in their resistance to that legislation perfected all of the devices and arguments that they would employ against the British. In 1764, as 200 years later, Americans drew upon the common sentiments and patterns of the consensus for their inspiration, and no internal divisions appeared (he minimized the Tory position) because of the commonalty of the American experience. Since no fundamental cleavage developed in the society, no counter-revolution followed the successful separation from Britain. Any disagreements that arose in the confederation and ratification period are of no consequence, for Americans all desire popular sovereignty based on the social compact, self-government, and a workable federal system. The Constitution as the fruition of an evolutionary "revolution" provides this, and, to Morgan, the proof of the consensus was the rapid massing of the ranks of the American people in support of the Constitution after ratification. Throughout this tightly woven and brilliantly argued presentation, Morgan stressed that the great principles applied by great men—Jefferson, Washington, John Adams, Franklin—but there is no mistaking the underlying deterministic psychological patterns which individually and collectively drove these men in the American consensus.

Clinton Rossiter in his book, *Seedtime of the Republic,* 1953, also proclaimed that "the first American Revolution" took place in the minds and hearts of men. "The American mind" had already been produced by a heart-felt drive for liberty that prompted an urge to be independent of Britain. In Rossiter's words, "This was one colonial people that went to war for liberty knowing in its bones what liberty was."[1] Americans, then, had their liberty and fought not to gain more, but to conserve what they already possessed. Rossiter paid homage to the consensus position that he called the "American party line" when he announced: "What is essential for students of our intellectual history to remember is that there were few deviationists from this line, that there was an overpowering consensus of political principles among the men of the Revolution."[2]

Louis B. Hartz continued the theme of a single tradition of American life from which there is no dissent in his "Democracy without a Democratic Revolution," *American Political Science Review,* June, 1952, and *The Lib-*

[1] Clinton Rossiter, *The First American Revolution,* New York, 1956, revised version of part I of *Seedtime of the Republic,* New York, 1953, p. 239.

[2] Clinton Rossiter, *The Political Thought of the American Revolution,* New York, 1963, Part III of *Seedtime of the Republic,* Harvest Books Edition, p. 54.

eral Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought Since the Revolution, 1955. Because of the lack of an institutionalized feudal aristocracy, conservatism in America was too weak to oppose what he called "the liberal tradition." With no challenge from an aristocratic feudalism, Americans did not develop a "bourgeoisie consciousness," and a pragmatic liberalism has governed the thinking of Americans, then and now. By constantly comparing the American Revolution with European revolutions, Hartz demonstrated how non-revolutionary the era from 1763 to 1789 really was. Unlike Morgan and Rossiter, Hartz fervently wished that he could say otherwise. He decried the emphasis Americans have placed upon democratic levelling that originated in the colonial period, for it has meant a denial for Americans of the freedom to be different. The Revolution only reinforced existing patterns and did not promote any alternatives—initiating neither a tradition of non-conformity nor a conservative tradition—a tragic flaw in Hartz's mind. John Locke's truths were self-evident and were translated from theory into fact by the pragmatic nature of Americans in order to fit into the American consensus.

Another believer in the pragmatic nature of American society and the American national character, Daniel Boorstin, argues in *The Genius of American Politics,* 1953, that the American "rebels" professed no dogmas or principles and aimed at safeguarding the free institutions constructed in the pre-1763 period. Theoretical European movements failed to influence the direction of American developments, including the Declaration of Independence, where Boorstin detected no Lockean or other Enlightenment concepts, only practical propositions. In this rejection of any principles in favor of practicality, both Boorstin and Hartz parted company with Morgan. Boorstin went on to assert that the British actions forced Americans to build a new nation in the same manner that they accomplished everything else, empirically and pragmatically.

To Boorstin, the inexorable flow of events, determined both by the American environment and the collective American psyche, has stripped Americans of any choice. Unenthusiastic "rebels," they have created something from necessity that they did not want. The portrait that Boorstin, like Hartz, painted of the American consensus was a distinctive but unhappy one. In a later book, *The Americans: The Colonial Experiences,* 1958, Boorstin appeared happier in his belief that American civilization is both improvised and flexible and that Americans should be proud of their total rejection of all theoretical propositions. Proud, too, that they had a revolution unlike any other—a non-revolution that produced superficial political changes but went no deeper and bred no discord within the basic structure of society, because that well-formed structure went unchallenged.

Proof that an identical social base was true for all the colonies was important to the consensus scheme. Robert E. Brown has attempted to do that for Massachusetts in *Middle-Class Democracy and the Revolution in Massachusetts, 1691-1780,* 1955, for Virginia in *Virginia, 1705-1786: Democracy or Aristocracy,* 1964, and tentatively for all America in *Charles Beard and the Constitution,* 1956. In each case, Brown claims that democracy prevailed both in an economic and political sense.

Not content with verifying the unanimity of American thought by depicting society as middle-class, Brown challenged the long-held assumptions and conclusions of Charles A. Beard and found both Beard's evidence and methodology deficient. Joining him in attacking Beard, Forrest MacDonald probed even deeper in *We the People: The Economic Origins of the Constitution,* 1958. While MacDonald also discovered that Beard oversimplified and frequently erred, he was more interested in assailing Beard's contention that economic interests over-shadowed local and other considerations. MacDonald reversed Beard by upholding the importance of local issues in the confederation years. Once again the consensus view rose to the top, for MacDonald could spot no basic conflict, everything being focused on local opposition factions who had neither purpose nor principles other than self-interest.

Yet another effort of the consensus school, *Origin of the American Revolution, 1759-1766,* 1960, by Bernhard Knollenberg, followed Morgan's lead by taking the patriotic position that the Americans had principle entirely on their side and by accenting the impact of British actions early in the Revolutionary era. Where Morgan pointed to the Stamp Act as the key, Knollenberg viewed the entire series of judgments and decisions between 1759 and 1766 as significant. Both men minimized Toryism and noted that Americans had agreed on certain rights before troubles with Britain began and were prepared to fight to preserve those rights.

In a variety of ways, other historians of the American consensus have concerned themselves with different aspects of the Revolution. They range from Oliver M. Dickerson, whose *The Navigation Acts and the American Revolution,* 1951, asserted that the Navigation Acts actually benefitted the colonies, to Frederick B. Tolles who proffered a backhanded compliment to J. Franklin Jameson as a great pioneer in historiography in his article "The American Revolution Considered as a Social Movement: A Re-Evaluation," *American Historical Review,* October, 1954, and then completely dismissed Jameson's thesis that there was a social revolution. Tolles stressed the continuity of patriotism, Americanism, and democracy throughout the eighteenth century. This group also includes Richard Hofstadter, whose obscure essay in the *American Quarterly,* Fall, 1950, "Beard and the

Constitution: The History of an Idea," claimed that by 1943, Beard had modified his position on the Constitution so drastically that he was actually moving close to the consensus position. Finally, a growing number of scholars have heeded the call of Edmund Morgan in "The American Revolution: Revisions in Need of Revising" that appeared in January, 1957, in the *William and Mary Quarterly,* for studies of local institutions in order to ferret out ideas corroborating this impression of unity. All bear the stamp of the consensus school—meticulously researched, capably argued, subtly spiced with a persuasive thesis.

Before 1945 and the continuing success of the consensus point of view, Charles A. Beard and J. Franklin Jameson had strongly promoted the idea that Americans in the Revolutionary period were deeply split by social and economic factors. Out of these divisions and conflicts came the revolutionary changes so evident in those years. These historians and their successors earned the title of historians of conflict because of their emphasis upon the differing traits, views, habits, and patterns of Americans. No effort is made to disguise the depth of the cleavages that existed. In fact, it would appear that the conflict historians took pride in the widespread strife and discord of the American Revolution, for these conflicts gave birth to the Revolution's outstanding achievements.

Today's American, as already noted, does not want to be reminded of strife and violence. When he is, he strives to convince himself that it is all somehow insignificant and meaningless. Once, the Beardians represented societal needs just as the consensus historians do today—indeed, Beard was proud of the label historical relativist. At best, Merrill Jensen and the rest have fought a delaying action in hopes that the pendulum would eventually move in the other direction. Their hopes may be realized sooner than they think, for while no other can claim that conflict is again gaining the primary position in Revolutionary studies, at least more and more younger historians are investigating the conclusions of the proponents of conflict rather than blindly pursuing the more societally popular view of consensus.

If any man can be deemed responsible for upholding the idea of conflict through the barren post-war years, it is Merrill Jensen. In *The New Nation,* 1950; *The Articles of Confederation: An Interpretation of the Social-Constitutional History of the American Revolution, 1774-1781,* reissued in 1959; and an article, "Democracy and the American Revolution" in the *Huntington Library Quarterly,* August, 1957, Jensen evinced no indication of altering his thesis that an increase in democracy was an objective before, during, and after the actual hostilities, and that this wish on the part of some Americans testified to a deep ideological split between

"radicals" (states-rights democrats) and "conservatives" (rationalist aristocrats). He rather proudly repeated this in the 1957 essay, noting that disapproval of his stand has been registered frequently, but he was unaware of any reason that would force him to withdraw his statement that "in spite of the paradoxes involved one may still maintain that the Revolution was essentially, though relatively, a democratic movement within the thirteen American colonies, and that its significance for the political and constitutional history of the United States lay in its tendency to elevate the political and economic status of the majority of the people."[3] Quite obviously, Jensen rejected any notion that democracy existed prior to the Revolution.

The charges of semantic manipulation that critics have hurled at Jensen are in large part valid, but do not disprove his larger conclusions. Such charges only obscure the main lines of the battle, because Jensen declares that men were motivated primarily by a love for principle and a search for a better place in American society. America had its share of deprived groups, and without the legitimate ambitions of these usually overlooked people, there would have been no upheaval of any kind. Jensen contended that the Articles of Confederation embodied the constitutional expression of this movement and embraced the tenets of the Declaration of Independence. Accordingly, the controversies in the years 1776-1788 over what governmental system Americans would finally adopt signify much more than a power struggle or a contest over which path leads more rapidly to the same place. If any tradition permeates American life, Jensen believed it to be the never-ending battle between democrat and aristocrat, libertarian and authoritarian, states-righter and nationalist, yes, and between the agrarian rural and urban mercantile societies.

Bernard Bailyn disagreed with Jensen on several points, but he agreed that a real revolution took place between 1775 and 1783. In "Political Experiences and Enlightenment Ideas in Eighteenth-Century America," *American Historical Review*, January, 1962, Bailyn commented that "this completion, this rationalization, this symbolization, this lifting into consciousness and endowing with high moral purposes inchoate, confused elements of social and political change—this was the American Revolution."[4] He went along with the consensus historians to the extent of accepting the notion that a great number of social and institutional reforms had been initiated earlier, paving the way for the Revolution, but he maintained that these reforms lacked legitimacy and that Americans instinc-

[3] Merrill Jensen, "Democracy and the American Revolution," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, XX (August, 1957), 321.

[4] Bernard Bailyn, "Political Experience and Enlightenment Ideas in Eighteenth Century America," *American Historical Review*, LXXVII (January, 1962), 351.

tively felt this lack. European ideas filled this vacuum that native experience and intuition could not, and they showed how to balance the warring political factions threatening to destroy any possible government established.

Bailyn testified to the importance of European concepts in adding substance to native genius. Robert R. Palmer in volume I of his *The Age of Democratic Revolution,* 1959, also drew upon European precedents and antecedents for inspiration. Palmer compared the American and French Revolutions and found that, in both places, privilege was challenged and overturned by men seeking increased democracy. He dramatized the subversive, violent, and revolutionary qualities of the American war. Patriotic Americans actually confiscated much more property than normally thought, and the Tories (the émigres of the American Revolution) fled their native land in the ratio of twenty-four per 1,000 population while only five Frenchmen fled per 1,000, almost all of whom returned eventually. Ignored by consensus scholars, the plight of the Tories driven from their homes by the vindictive victors, fortifies the conflict thesis by clearly demonstrating the basic nature of the divisions within America. Certain Americans subverted legal government, ousted their opponents and seized their property, and set up the mechanism for a revolutionary government based on principles of popular sovereignty. The native privileged groups fought back and succeeded in preventing total democracy, but the lines were drawn for future conflicts sure to come.

Stanley Elkins and Eric McKitrick broke sharply with Jensen and Palmer by rejecting the ideological approach and substituting an institutional analysis. In their eyes, the Federalists were the heroes. They insist in "The Founding Fathers: Young Men of the Revolution," *Political Science Quarterly,* 1961, that the source of Federalism lay not in a contempt for the Revolution but in a profound and growing sense of involvement in revolutionary activities by a brilliant and aggressive band of nationally-oriented statesmen. Revolution actually came when these men—led by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, Gouverneur and Robert Morris, James Wilson, John Jay, James Duane, Henry Knox, and George Washington—pushed the concept of nationalism to a triumphant conclusion in the Constitution. This process paralleled the actual fighting and came to a head in the postwar period. The most audacious and revolutionary act in these years was the summoning of the Philadelphia convention at Annapolis in September, 1786, by a handful of visionaries. Once the Philadelphia convention began, the Federalists had an opportunity to exploit their greatest weapon, energy, against the inertia of their foes. McKitrick and Elkins lay heavy stress upon the psychological differences with the Federalist advantages of youth

versus age, cosmopolitanism versus provincialism, activism versus passiveness, audacity versus timidity, and idealism versus self-interet. The authors have almost totally reversed Jensen's arguments in a return to a position nearly indistinguishable from the venerable patristic tradition of the semi-divine Founding Fathers.

Two quite different, but stimulating, interpretations were expounded in Clarence L. Ver Steeg's "The Amercian Revolution Considered as an Economic Movement," *Huntington Library Quarterly,* August, 1957, and Cecilia Kenyon's "Republicanism and Radicalism in the American Revolution: An Old-Fashioned Interpretation," *William and Mary Quarterly,* April, 1962, and "Men of Little Faith: The Anti-Federalists on the Nature of Representative Government," *William and Mary Quarterly,* January, 1955. Ver Steeg pled for historians to examine political, social, and cultural factors in order to trace their impact upon economic developments. He suggested tentatively that the economic consequences were at least as important as any other developments in these years of conflict. The Kenyon articles, on the other hand, return to the ideological outlook of Jensen, but she rejected his terminology. The Anti-Federalists were reactionaries who feared all power that they could not control. Eventually, however, their intentions of keeping power in their hands on the local level were swept away by the advances of a radicalism that they unleashed by resisting Great Britain. They were simply overwhelmed by the revolutionary implications of their own creation, starting with the Declaration of Independence and concluding with the construction of a new federal system.

The major disagreements between the conflict and consensus historians embrace seven broad areas. First, the consensus scholars, with the important exception of MacDonald, consider the period before 1763 to be most meaningful, whereas the conflict historians concern themselves with the years after 1763, focusing with ever more clarity as they near 1787-1788. Second, while consensus historians do not entirely agree among themselves as to whether there was a revolution, even a non-violent one "in the hearts and minds of men," conflict scholars assure one and all that a "real revolution" occurred even though relatively late in the period. Third, because of their interest in the earlier period, the students of consensus primarily survey the cause of the Revolutionary situation, with slight attention to the consequences. The believers in the conflict approach differ by stressing the consequences and discussing causation only in so far as a desire for more democracy can be observed as a possible cause.

Fourth, with the important exceptions of Morgan and Jensen, the consensus school denies a major role to European ideas in promoting American development, and conflict historians find that American society was (and

still is) deeply in debt to Europe for both ideas and institutions. Fifth, consensus historians seem more willing to employ new methods and concepts than their antagonists, who are by comparison old-fashioned, and frequently proudly so. Sixth, the new methods and behaviorial studies have led consensus historians to a new type of behaviorial determinism where men trapped in their own desires and psychological drives are pushed inevitably toward a psychologically predestined end; conflict historians may also be deterministic but generally in the old pattern, or else they may encourage the optimistic notion that men control events almost entirely. Finally, the consensus position by definition fosters a belief that Americans possess but one tradition accepted by all, and the conflict position just as vehemently denies that such a singular tradition does now or ever did exist, preferring to see American life as a multiplicity of interests holding a wide variety of ideas all clamoring for wider public acceptance but always in opposition to each other.

Americans should be able to admit that this was a true revolution in every sense of the word, for the period from 1763 to 1788 marks the beginning, not the end of the Americanizing process. Previous to that time only Englishmen, or Germans, or Scotch-Irish lived in the thirteen colonies, but no Americans lived there. After seven years of war and over twenty years of agitation, the American tag was legitimately applied to all the inhabitants of the former British colonies, but there remained no agreement as to what else the term implied. Conflict arose out of the efforts of various groups to translate their deeply-held principles into reality, to make them the base for the new society and nation that they were building. As early as 1764, the opposition of Whig versus Tory, or incipient democrat versus privileged aristicrat, can be observed. Edmund Morgan asked how could there be a revolution without principles? The same question can be modified slightly to read, how could there be a revolution without conflict? Evidence for the answer that there was conflict is apparent in the urgency with which each group advanced its own socio-economic, ideological, and institutional claims, while denying the validity of all rival claims.

The Cold War and the perpetual atmosphere of suspicion, distrust, and emotionalism that it has bred in the United States cannot be resolved in the old ways, but a society unwilling to face up to this reality has made unfair and unpalatable demands on all of its historians, including those writing about the American Revolution. Historians are forced to adopt the consensus position, which nullifies any value they may have in aiding a fear-ridden society to right itself. A new concern needs to be promoted, and historians should lead the way to demonstrate not how unified a

people Americans have been in their past with no major difficulties or problems, but how well, or poorly, in that same past Americans solved great and pressing problems and resolved their differences. In so doing Americans might conceivably gain some insights into their continuing differences over liberty and authority in a democratic nation.

WILBUR JOSEPH CASH: ICONOCLAST

BOBBY G. MOSS

For many, travail is the spur to achievement and fame, and Wilbur Joseph Cash was no exception. The travail that he suffered from being a lonely child, thwarted love, ill health, and buffeting by critics made him an iconoclast.

Cash's earliest recollections were of Gaffney, South Carolina, a rather drab village composed of several cotton mills. Here the first of a chain of events began to lead Cash to be an iconoclast. Because his father, John Cash, managed the Limestone Mill company store, their house stood in a little valley midway between town and the mill, isolated, as was proper, from the houses of the "lint heads."[1] Here Cash spent countless lonely hours. There were few children to play with except his brothers and the children of the workers, and the latter snubbed him. Parrot-like, they imitated their elders and mistrusted anyone connected with the administrative group. Had Cash been inclined to be aggressive, he could have forced his way into their company, but he was timid and small for his age. Although his brothers were only slightly younger than he, he found no pleasure in their company. His brothers recall that Cash was difficult to entice to play, and he was awkward of movement when he did join them. Cash later wrote of these years: "Beyond a little black nursemaid . . . and an occasional visitor, I had no companions save my little brothers, despised from the height of my superior years."[2]

Deepening loneliness led Cash to learn to read by the age of five. Reading developed into a life-long passion and became an escape, not only from loneliness, but also from reality. In his own account of his life, Cash said he read "tons of trash . . . all that was printed was grist to my mill, and so by my early teens I had got through much that was excellent and still more that was astounding pabulum for a child."[3] Often he was so absorbed in his reading that he would not hear his mother calling, and she would switch him for his not answering. She acknowlelged, as time passed, that she had often punished Cash wrongly. Mrs. Cash thought much reading was unhealthy, so she took away his books, only to find that while she was busy hiding one, Cash was easily becoming absorbed in another. Forcing Cash to play rather than to read led him to hide under the high-

[1] "Lint heads" was Cash's favorite name for the cotton textile industry employees. The term referred to the lint that filled their hair at the end of each day's labor.

[2] There were only two years difference in the ages of Cash and the brother nearest his age.

[3] Cash, "Editorial," *The American Mercury*, XXIV (October, 1931), xxvii-xxxii.

floored house. Once he found this haven, there was a daily race between mother and son. At rare times he was outmaneuvered, and escape beneath the house was impossible. When such an occasion arose, he was apt to retreat to a large maple tree, where he clung precariously with his precious book. Mrs. Cash did not really care that he read, but her heart ached with fear and uncertainty for the results of such an unnatural course for her child.[4] When cool weather came, the contest shifted its scene to the attic, pantry, closets, and the space under beds, all of which became hiding places.

Wilbur had just turned thirteen when he gave his mother one of her greatest frights. She found him in the attic one winter day, book in lap, unconscious. Cash showed no ill effects from the experience, although such lapses of consciousness were to occur several more times during his teens.[5] Perhaps, this was the first evidence of his forthcoming nervous disorder.

Cash's formal education began in Gaffney, where he spent his elementary years in a school attended mainly by the children from the mill village. Fortunately, the family moved to Boiling Springs, North Carolina, when Cash was thirteen and ready to enter the eighth grade. Wilbur was enrolled in a nearby Baptist Academy as a day student. Most of the boys and girls were six or seven years older than Cash. He later wrote that their "principal business in hand was the making of love."[6] Almost immediately, Cash became charmed with one of the lasses, only to be scorned and laughed at because he was younger and smaller. As a result, Cash was driven deeper into his books. He made extensive use of the unusually good library of the school. One of the instructors discovered Wilbur's talent of almost total recall and encouraged him to become a debater. Years later he noted that after attaining height,[7] both physical and intellectual, and winning honors as a debater, he had "better luck"[8] with the girls; however, he was still lonely and was beginning to think he was "different."

Although Cash had developed no affinity for hard work, after graduation from the Boiling Springs High School he decided to work a year before

[4] There were three other children in the Cash family by the time Wilbur was ten years old. Henry was born on July 19, 1902, Allen was born on August 28, 1904, and Bertie was born on August 22, 1910. Mabel Ruth, the Cash's first child, died of nephritis at the age of thirty months.

[5] Interview with W. John Cash, Father of W. J. Cash, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, June 22, 1963.

[6] Cash, "Editorial."

[7] Cash was still short of stature when he finished high school. A thyroid disorder late in his college career suddenly increased his height to six feet.

[8] Cash, "Editorial."

going to college. He worked as a tally-clerk, timekeeper, and carpenter's helper from Sparrow's Point, Maryland, to Jacksonville, Florida. From these experiences he began to understand the mind of Southerners.[9] But these flirtations with wandering and working were short-lived, as Cash explained, for "like Ferdinand, I had much rather pass my days smelling the flowers."[10] The hard work soothed Cash's itching heel for a time, but only briefly.

In the fall of 1918, at the age of eighteen, Cash began his college career at Wofford College in Spartanburg, South Carolina. Later referring to his college days in a short biographical sketch for *The American Mercury,* Cash noted that "from Wofford I came eventually to Wake Forest College."[11] With the word "eventually" he passed over an experience he wanted to forget. Sometime during his high school days he heard of Valparaiso University in Indiana. He transferred to that midwestern school after one year at Wofford without any apparent reason and became immediately homesick. He quickly asked permission to come home, but his father, who secretly hoped his son would break a "mother fixation" and mature into real manhood, denied the request. To fight his loneliness, Wilbur read as much as he could and even took a job as a fireman in one of the school's heating plants. While rolling wheelbarrows of coal, he mentally composed letters begging his father to let him return to North Carolina. His father finally relented. In 1920, Cash entered Wake Forest College. Here he spent his time reading desultorily, editing the college newspaper *(Old Gold and Black),* and demonstrating his capacity "with reference to the particularly vicious brands of corn liquor which flourishes in those parts."[12]

He disliked Wake Forest until he began to study under Dr. C. C. Pearson, a history professor. Pearson's comparison of "The Mind of a North Carolinian" with "The Mind of a Virginian" caught Cash's imagination and interest. Cash's keen mind also attracted Dr. Pearson, who invited him to join the Political Science Club. Others who influenced Cash and endeared Wake Forest to him were Dr. Benjamin Sledd, English professor, Dr. Thurmond D. Kitchin, Hygiene professor, and Dr. W. L. Poteat, the college president, a man whom Cash idolized.

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[9] Cash's first impression of the Southern workers came at the age of ten, when he took a job at the Limestone Mill as a water boy. Appropriately, he spent his first pay check for a bookshelf.

[10] Cash, "Work Pains Paine," *Charlotte News,* December 3, 1939.

[11] Cash, "Editorial."

[12] *Ibid.*

Not many of his fellow classmen knew Cash well, for he was withdrawn and silent until he had a few beers or a sip of "corn." Then he was quite articulate. Beer or whiskey was hard to find near this pinnacle of Baptistry, and the nearest easily accessible alcohol was several miles to the northeast, just beyond the county line.[13] Rumor had it, however, that "bust head" could be purchased in the local hot dog, magazine, and pool hall emporium. The only evidence of such purchases was the fact that on occasions Cash could be found there, sitting either in the shoe shine chair or on a stack of empty soft drink crates, or leaning against a pool table talking fluently and elaborately on one of his favorite subjects.

Cash found college quite tolerable, although not always challenging. Once he said that he "had rather have been sitting under magnolia trees"[14] than in class. Classmates were then calling him "Sleepy."[15] As he moved about the campus he squinted behind his glasses, walked with a preoccupied air and rather ungainly gait, and held his shoulders in a slight stoop. He had a dreamy, faraway look in his eyes and yet was noticeably deliberate in his movements. For anyone who concluded that Cash was asleep, there was a surprise. If called upon in class, he would rise and with a few well-chosen words from his almost endless vocabulary quickly sum up the lecture. Quite often he displayed nearly total recall by repeating the entire lecture almost word for word.[16] Cash continued to read voraciously. Finding the Wake Forest Library inadequate for his needs, he often visited North Carolina State, the University of North Carolina, and Duke University to satisfy his craving for books.

Sports held a peculiar interest for Cash. Although he did not participate, he did enjoy observing the spectators. He found this diversion so entertaining that he often worked in the college boiler plant in order to purchase tickets for sports events.[17]

Cash enjoyed debating and writing. He often argued that Mencken's idea that the South was intellectually barren was false, while inwardly he believed that Mencken was right. Cash wrote short stories and articles, but his stories never pleased him. One of his short stories was chosen by the faculty in a contest as the best short story of 1921. A romantic story

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[13] At this time Wake Forest College was located at Wake Forest, North Carolina.

[14] Cash, "Work Pains Paine."

[15] Two accounts of how Cash received the name "Sleepy" exist. One relates that Cash went to sleep while sitting on the railing of the front porch of his home. He fell into the yard and his delighted friends nicknamed him "Sleepy." The other account is based on his habit of closing his eyes when listening to someone speak.

[16] Interview with Mrs. Charles Elkins, sister of W. J. Cash, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, June 22, 1963.

[17] Interview, W. John Cash, June 22, 1963.

about a shipwreck in the South Seas, "The Derelict" contained many of his iconoclastic ideas about society, but he had not developed the caustic pen and acid manner that would number him among the most controversial writers of his time.

The rejections of the first twenty-two years played a definite part in making Cash into a lonely iconoclast. Even in college his attempts to be accepted led only to further frustration. Trying to gain attention at Wake Forest by quoting Robert G. Ingersol, the atheist, brought him recognition as a religious rebel. But it was not until he returned to college after a semester of suspension by the faculty discipline board that he realized he was gaining the attention he fervently craved by being "different." And, convinced that he was "different," he began to live the role of a Bohemian, an iconoclast, and a rebel. By the time he completed college in June, 1922 (although not really prepared for any profession), he had begun a lifelong debate with society. But his problem was how to carry on this debate!

At this time another rejection in the affairs of love added to his iconoclasm. What to most men would be a game became for Cash a traumatic experience. From his early high school days the affection that Cash extended to persons outside his own family was rejected, and on each occasion he was deeply hurt. When restlessness became intensive, Cash left the newspaper job he had secured after graduation to become an instructor in English at Georgetown College, a Baptist institution in Georgetown, Kentucky. Almost immediately he fell in love with a very attractive coed, and, when the young lady did not return his affection, he became thoroughly convinced that he must be "different" and not like other men. Almost immeliately after the rejection Cash developed nervous disorders, and at the end of the school year he decided to leave Georgetown. He hoped to obtain some higher degree and eventually to return to college teaching. Anyway, Cash realized he had no business in a sectarian institution.

Not content to leave the education field with only one year of experience, he became the English and French instructor in the Blue Ridge School for Boys, a private school in Hendersonville, Kentucky. Again he failed to fit into the scheme of things.

The next year, then twenty-five years of age, he took a job with the Chicago *Post* and remained in that city as a free-lance writer part of the following year. The cold winter, the bustle of the city, and restlessness began to wear on him, and he returned to Boiling Springs.

Cash drew deeper into himself, but he continued to long for the coed who had rejected him. One of his better newspaper articles, written in 1936, "Why Write? Ah, Helen Knows Why," reveals that one of the reasons

he wanted to succeed as a writer was to show the Georgetown College coed that he could be successful. She was an inspiration for much that he did, and she was, in a sense, always with him.

An additional key to the iconoclasm of Wilbur Joseph Cash was the ill health that plagued him until his death. As a boy he was frail and small for his age. His mother was constantly doctoring him for childhood diseases that seemed to leave him weaker than other children. His mid-teens were the healthiest years Cash knew, but his health began to wane soon after he entered college. During his early college days, a thyroid condition developed and Cash suddenly began to grow both in height and weight. After this his health seemed to maintain a plateau of inactiveness until the rebuff by the lovely coed, when a nervous disorder developed. The rebuff no doubt added to his condition, but it could hardly have been the cause. Sometime late in 1926, Cash returned to the newspaper field as a reporter for the *Charlotte News,* the evening paper of Charlotte, North Carolina. The thyroid condition continued to plague him at intervals and subjected him to spells of choking and vertigo. The condition became so bad that he went to Johns Hopkins Hospital for treatment. Although the doctors did not arrive at any conclusion concerning a cure, Cash thought they had helped him, and, physically, he was somewhat better. Cash probably never overcame completely the conviction that he was a very sick man. There were periods, however, when he convinced himself that he was quite well, and for a time he would be healthy, physically and mentally.

Early in 1928, Cash gave up his job at the suggestion of doctors and returned home to Boiling Springs. The doctors recommended that Cash turn to manual labor, but he soon became disgusted with this and sought the work he loved most—writing. In the fall of 1928, he began editing a county weekly, *The Cleveland Press,* in Shelby, North Carolina, but he soon had to abandon the *Press* because of increasingly poor health and lack of finances. Cash may have concluded around 1929 that he had a brain tumor (one was reported to have been found during the autopsy of his body),[18] for he again underwent a medical examination at Johns Hopkins Hospital in an effort to find the cause of his headaches. Almost constant illness, whether imagined or real, certainly helped shape Cash's character.

Like so many others during the depression, Wilbur Cash, unable to find a job, returned home once more. He was not alone, however, for both of his brothers and their wives and babies were also there. Partly to escape the reality of the situation, Cash turned to writing. Although the house in

[18] Josephus Daniels, Letter to Mr. and Mrs. W. John Cash, Mexico City, Mexico, July 3, 1941.

Boiling Springs was large, he could find no peace in which to write. There were no office buildings in Boiling Springs, but the town's only bank had failed. He rented the building and worked there at his noisy old typewriter, but the children of the town frequently pressed their noses against the windows as they watched him work. The grotesque faces they created were too much diversion for a writer who normally stripped his workroom in order to avoid escaping into daydreams.[19] Also, there was a lively group of boys who looked upon Cash as "fair game." They liked to disturb the clicking of the typewriter and to stir Cash to unaccustomed fury. To escape them, Cash began to work in a dusty room behind the village's tiny post office. The only member of his family welcome into this sanctuary was his oldest niece, Elizabeth. Though never very fond of children, he became a godfather to this three-year-old, and his role as baby sitter also became something of a game for both of them.

The peace that Cash and Elizabeth shared was not to be found outside the post office, because he encountered both jealousy and mistrust occasioned by his education and his travels. He also came face to face with those injustices that are to be found everywhere—but nowhere perhaps as vividly as in small towns. Above all, he encountered that lack of tolerance that rural Southerners exhibited toward anyone even remotely suspected of being different.

Several articles about various phases of Southern life finally met Cash's approval, and he mailed them to appropriate magazines. Some of them returned almost immediately with rejection slips. Disgusted with himself and discouraged, he wrote intermittently and walked the bounds of his working area. Still disgruntled, he almost threw away the check from his first sale. It was from *The American Mercury,* and, thinking it was an advertisement, he cast it aside. Only after taking down the file of his rejected articles to see if anything could be salvaged did he realize that the article sent the *Mercury* had not returned. Hastily, with trembling hands, he searched for the discarded letter and tore it open. Peering into the envelope, his heart jumped as he recognized the unmistakable form of a check. He was so elated that he could hardly read the accompanying letter. It informed him that the two-hundred dollar check was full payment for an article entitled "Jehovah of the Tar Heels," which would appear in the July, 1929, issue. The first sale had been made! He called the Shelby *Daily Star,* and the next day's issue informed the people of Boiling Springs that they had a writer living in their midst.

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[19] Cash, "Why Write? Ah, Helen Knows Why," *Charlotte News,* March 15, 1936.

After seven years of what Cash believed to be unending failures, having an article accepted by Henry L. Mencken was a tremendous boost at the very moment he needed it most. Mencken gave him assurance that his iconoclastic style was correct. His feeling of inferiority vanished for a brief time as he found himself and the means by which to carry on his debate with society.

The peace of mind that Cash found at the age of twenty-nine was illusive and short-lived. Even though the South was still recoiling from Mencken's whip in 1929 and although "Cash's skillful, witful, iconoclastic probing under the layers of highly bruisable magnolia petals still blanketing the South was just his (Mencken's) cup of hemlock,"[20] Cash had his relapses into doubt and uncertainty. Between 1929 and 1935 Cash wrote eight articles for Mencken's *American Mercury*. All of these were on some aspect of the South and Southern life. He made no personal or malicious attacks, but he wrote indignantly, because he believed the subjects discussed were hurting the land he loved. The people whom Cash attacked, mainly politicians, were "blots on the fair face of the South." Yet, to the fellows leaning on the old Confederate cannon at the courthouse square, they were great and far-seeing benefactors. As a result of these articles, Cash received many caustic letters from faithful followers of those he criticized, and his peace of mind and his confidence were shattered.

The most significant article of the group, "The Mind of the South" (later to be expanded into the book by the same title), brought down upon him threats of a lynching or at least a tarring and feathering.[21] Some fifty editorials referred to "The Mind of the South" and vast numbers of letters poured in. The deluge of mail and editorials upset Cash, who expected some reactions but not that much! Forty-eight of the editorials came from within the old Confederacy and two from Yankee papers that were suddenly consumed with a great tenderness for the South. Out of all these editorials, only the one written by Grover Hall of the Montgomery *Advertiser* had anything pleasant to say. He said that Cash wrote well, but, like all the other editorialists, Hall opined at great length that Cash was unmistakably "an idiot." Cash often would take the letters and editorials, especially the latter, and walk down the country road in front of his house until he was removed from the troubled sight of human habitation. There, quiet and alone, he read them with disgust and thought at times that only

[20] Mary Bagley Ross (Northrup) Cash (Maury), MS, "Letter to Miss Milam," May 6, 1957.

[21] Cash was still smarting from the reaction seven years later when he penned the article, "Criticism of Criticism, or, Rather, Some Remembered Winces by a Young Man Who Wrote as He Pleased," *Charlotte News*, July 5, 1936.

the grave could thereafter be sweet.[22] Wilbur Cash wanted the South to take him to its bosom, but it had not and could not. He had been rejected again, and he was driven deeper within himself.

Cash got precious little comfort from his plaudits. One of the gentlemen among the letter-writing critics did express esthetic approval of Cash. But that gentleman, Cash said, "was sadly uncertain in the matters of his spelling, his grammar and his chirography, and was plainly a little sprained in the brain into the bargain."[23] The rest of the letter writers were far more scathing in their attacks than the editors. In recalling how thin his skin was and how sharp were their words, Cash said:

> If the latter (editors) insinuated darkly that I was an ass, a simpleton, a callow booby, a nursling who ought to be spanked roundly and smart-alecky and sent back to the sophomore class where I plainly belonged, a low disloyal fellow without heart and soul—if the editors heaped these upon my hapless head, the letter writers came more forthrightly to the point and pronounced me a polecat, a horse-thief, and a yellow dog, and some of them added admonitions to stay away from their part of the country on pain of a fast coat of tar and feathers.[24]

Another of these letter writers was a nice old gentleman from Nashville, Tennessee, with the surname of Cash—a distant kinsman—who wrote that Cash had brought disgrace upon the family name. On behalf of his fellow countrymen, he denounced Cash as a traitor to Dixie, read him out of the family, out of the country, out of hope in this world and in the next, and called on the secular arm of the law to take Cash in charge.

Shaken by the widespread reaction to "The Mind of the South" article, Cash was not sure what approach to use in the future. But, since a slashing, poignant assault appealed to Mencken, what better vehicle could he hope for than *The American Mercury*? How else could he get his provoking remarks into the hands of Southerners? Cash decided to forge ahead and tell the truth as he saw it, "for truth is the first value of humanity, and loyalty to truth is the highest loyalty to humanity."[25] From his ivory tower in the post office at Boiling Springs, Cash saw deep into the hearts and minds of the Southerners, and he struck with a pen that the Southerners considered acid, biting, and cruel. It was true that often his attacks would leave a scar, but, in the final analysis, Cash believed he could render substantial aid to his beloved Southland, and, perhaps, he would one day win acceptance.

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[22] Cash, "Comment on Soothsaying: Artist Ain't Gents," *Charlotte News*, October 30, 1938.

[23] Cash, "Criticism of Criticism. . . ."

[24] *Ibid.*

[25] *Ibid.*

Cash concluded that the only defense the South could have for its way of life was a convincing account of its own history. He would have to be an individualist and have the courage of a real pioneer to write such an account. He would have to tear into the mind of the South and expose it without more than a hint that he loved the region. When Cash told how romanticism of the South spread through the poorest and most ignorant classes, he could make no nostalgic plea for days gone with the wind. He would have to be a realist, regardless of the fact that, as a Southerner, he was born and reared as a romantic who loved to "gallop with Jeb Stuart's Cavalrymen." Could he do this? If so, what method or style would be best? His lifelong struggle provided the answer: to reveal the truth as he saw it. A caustic pen would have to attack the bad, eat it away, and reveal the good. With tongue in cheek he would have to jostle or shake violently, as the circumstances required, to awaken the South.

To understand the difficulty of writing such a book it is necessary to go back to March, 1930, when Cash had his first interview with Mrs. Alfred Knopf, who had become very much interested in Cash because of his article "Mind of the South." She asked just the right questions to encourage him to get to work, but beginning was the hardest part of the work. He wrote three separate introductions of which the shortest was finally printed. All three introductions contained essentially the same idea, but the choice of words varied considerably; thus, his greatest problem from the first to the last sentence of his book was to find the correct phrase to express his exact thoughts. His typist had to revise the final draft many times.[26] Only printer's ink ended this struggle.

From 1930 to 1938 Cash could not force himself to work seriously on the book. There were several reasons for this reluctance: ill health, articles to be written, and the daily work on the newspaper.

Cash's greatest fear in writing was fear of the critics. He was so afraid of them that he documented the first manuscript for Knopf with innumerable footnotes that filled, in places, half of the page. But, before Cash completed *The Mind of the South* he decided to incorporate these footnotes into the text and let the book stand on its own merit.[27]

Fear of critics was not the only deterrent. Being a perfectionist did not speed his work. Every word was weighed carefully, compared with other possible words, tested in each phrase or sentence, and then discarded or accepted. Sentence after sentence, paragraph after paragraph, page after

[26] Interview with Erma Drum, typist for W. J. Cash, Shelby, North Carolina, June 21, 1963.

[27] Cash, "Reading and Writing: Those Infernal Footnotes," *Charlotte News*, July 31, 1938.

page were rewritten again and again until he was partially satisfied. Sometimes when he completed what he thought was an eloquent passage, he plunged into despair, fearful that his readers would not like it.

The drudgery of writing often made him invent excuses not to work, or, if he had money, he might hitch a ride into Shelby and join the fellows for a beer and a few games of pool. One of his friends was Charles Keel, the linotype operator of the *Shelby Daily Star.* They spent hours at Al's Soda Shop, which was in reality a beer parlor. Keel was a student of literature and equal to Cash in knowledge of current Southern literature. For hours the two men slowly drank their beers and talked. Their conversations were not all on literature. They ran a rather weird gauntlet of subjects, from arts and literature to male impotency. It was only when money and excuses ran out that Cash forced himself to write.

In 1935 as Knopf began to have trouble getting Cash to finish the book, Cameron Shipp, Cash's book review editor on the *Charlotte News,* became the mediator. Shipp called Knopf, and, although they were total strangers, he persuaded the New York publisher to pay Cash a small salary. This arrangement continued several years as Cash procrastinated. After going to Charlotte in 1937 to work for the *Charlotte News,* Cash took three leaves of absence to finish the last chapter. But, even with this free time, he often failed to write a page. Burke Davis, a fellow reporter, recalls that the gossip around the *News* office was that it took Cash five years to write the last chapter. In late 1940, when Cash had finished this great undertaking, he was afraid that the critics would not like it. The agony of waiting pressed heavily on him.

Almost as if driven by a sense of an awareness of impending doom—for he may have learned his fate in Baltimore—Wilbur J. Cash crowded a lot of living into the last six months of his life. After ten years of procrastinuation he suddenly completed *The Mind of the South.* After years of bachelorhood, he suddenly became a married man. After years of anonymity, he was suddenly acclaimed by critics, writers, and scholars. Many commentators on the southern scene have presumed that this man died frustrated and unhappy. Some have said his suicide resulted from inner torment caused by an inability to resolve the paradoxes he found in himself and his beloved South. However, this does not seem to be true. In fact, such folk seem to be committing the very sin that W. J. Cash was attacking: "excessive romanticism."

The acclaim that *The Mind of the South* has received since Cash's death would seem to prove that its author spoke clearly and distinctly. He said what he wanted to say in a precise manner. He had dissected,

analyzed, and examined the mind of his native region with exceptional clarity and accuracy. He had no cause to be disturbed or distressed. On the contrary, he had every reason to be elated. He had achieved a regional analysis that remains to this day the envy of all Americans. But, irony of ironies, having laid bare the mind of his native land, it was his *own* mind —the iconoclastic brain that had completed this searching introspective work—that faltered and failed.

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